Word Portraits

CHARACTER SKETCHES
OF FAMOUS MEN
AND WOMEN

MAXIMILIAN HARDEN

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Word Portraits

MAXIMILIAN HARDEN

WORD PORTRAITS

Character Sketches of Famous Men and Women

BY

MAXIMILIAN HARDEN

IN A TRANSLATION FROM THE GERMAN BY

JULIUS GABE

William Blackwood and Sons
Edinburgh and London
1911

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TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

THE extraordinary influence and power of Maximilian Harden's pen are very largely due to the fact that throughout his brilliant career as an essayist and publicist he has always held aloof from all political party phraseology, to his absolute fearlessness in the expression of his opinions, and to his ready and poignant wit. An extraordinarily well-read scholar —in many languages and on most subjects—his style of composition, a marshalling of long rows of co-ordinated sentences, bristling with quotations from the classics of all nations and replete with quaint *similia*, makes delightful reading in the original German. The attempt, however, to reproduce in English the author's peculiarly intricate and highly ornate verbal structure may cause a somewhat stilted effect on the eye and the ear of those attuned to a terser form of descriptive prose.

Born in Berlin on October 20, 1861, Maximilian Harden was educated at the High School in the Prussian capital and subsequently under private tutors. He soon became well known through his

political and social articles, his theatrical and art criticisms, and his literary *causeries*, which appeared in such leading periodicals as 'Die Nation,' 'Die Gegenwart,' and 'Die Frankfurter Zeitung,' and were signed by his *nom de plume* of "Apostata." Under that name most of these essays were collected and published in 1892, and a further series, under the title of 'Literatur und Theater,' in 1896 in Berlin. In the former year he founded the famous weekly magazine 'Die Zukunft,' which he himself has edited ever since: probably the most influential, and certainly the most fearless, in its clear and calm critical judgment, of all existing German periodicals.

Maximilian Harden came most prominently before the public by his determined and staunch championship of the Bismarckian, and by his destructive criticism of the Caprivian policy. A ruthless Hercules of journalism, he did much towards cleansing the Augean stable of Berlin society. In 1900 he was arrested and imprisoned for six months on the charge of *lèse-majesté*.

For the English versification of my translations of many of the German verses quoted by Maximilian Harden, I am indebted to Mr Herbert Jacobs, B.A., of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-Law. The translation of verse from one language into another, reproducing metre and rhyme, and above all their ideal meaning, is a task of the greatest difficulty; in some cases an impossible one. In several of Heinrich Heine's lyrics, for instance, "*der Mond*" (in German *he*, the moon,

is a male noun; "die Sonne," *she*, the sun, a female) makes sentimental love to the lotus or the water-lily; and thus, owing to the altered sex in English, or for that matter in French, the charming poems lose all their romance and become meaningless.

The suggestion to place these character sketches before the English-speaking reading public, the encouragement to carry out what at the beginning appeared an almost impossible task, and the selection of the title 'Word Portraits,' instead of the literal translation of the original "Köpfe" as "Heads," are due to one, of whom, as Elizabeth Barrett Browning says in the Dedication of her Poems to her father, "it would not become me to speak before the world."

J. G.

London, *October* 1911.

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OLD WILLIAM

"Der alte Wilhelm": Wilhelm I. Friedrich Ludwig, German Emperor and King of Prussia (*born* March 22, 1797, in Berlin; *died* March 9, 1888, in Berlin), second son of King Friedrich Wilhelm III. of Prussia and Queen Luise. Married Princess Augusta von Sachsen-Weimar on June 11, 1829. *Children:* Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (afterwards Emperor Friedrich III.), and Princess Luise, who in 1856 married the Grandduke Friedrich von Baden.

OLD WILLIAM

(*Written in the autumn of* 1895)

THE quarter-century of rejoicing lies behind us. After the harvest-day of Sedan, the midsummer heat, which so quickly had ripened and heaped up the victories of the German arms, abated, and a fresh tussle commenced in the autumnal landscape, the prize for which was more difficult to snatch, and necessitated longer waiting. True the Bonaparte Empire and its luck, which alone had propped it up for a quarter of a century, had collapsed; with impetuous passion Gambetta, the first knight of the Latin democracy, called together the people to desperate resistance, and from all sides there rolled up in dense bands new hosts, remnants of the old dispersed armies, the hastily-armed legions of the French youth and dissolute rabble, to bring timely relief to the endangered capital. The attempt, unparalleled in history, to besiege a town of millions, defended with fanatic courage, was to be checked by a racial war, such as in its frenzied fury the modern world had never before beheld. Strassburg fell, Orleans was stormed, Soissons capitulated, and the

gates of Metz were opened to the German troops; yet Paris still held out, and although glad tidings of victory and surrender were frequent enough, all eyes were turned toward Paris and every ear listened, hopeful or apprehensive, for the moment when the thunder of cannon on the Seine would be silenced and the fate of two dominant nations decided. During this anxious pause there was great activity in the headquarters of the Prussian King. From Rothschild's castle of Ferrières, the War Lord had moved to the Prefecture at Versailles, where he waited in patient quietude until the strong hand of his faithful counsellor, who now again stepped into the foreground of events, had cautiously knitted fine threads together into a firm net, which in the future could safely and lastingly embrace the German races. Slowly, silently, and prudently, about the turn of the year 1870, the work of unification was being prepared: prejudice and scruple, old grudges and incipient fear were overcome with mild determination, and eventually there dawned the day when in the Castle of Splendour of the Sun King, which in gigantic golden letters had once been dedicated *à toutes les gloires de la France*, a German Emperor was fated to place the crown upon his ageing head. The crowned, as a boy of nine, had experienced Prussia's ignominious humiliation, his childish, sharp ear had caught the news that the insolence of the victoriously onward storming Corsican would no longer recognise a German Empire, and that Francis the Second had renounced, five days after Napoleon's threatening pronouncement, the title and dignity of Roman-German Emperor. Now, at the age of seventy-two, he had overthrown another Napoleon

and led Prussia, to which in two heavy wars the hegemony within Germany had been secured, to the highest pinnacle of glory. He might well be proud: and remained modest; he might loudly vaunt his accomplishment: and voluntarily hid in the dark. To the court chaplain, Rogge, who was appointed to make an oration prior to the actual ceremony of crowning, he said emphatically: "Do not extol me in your address, for I have been but an instrument in the hand of God."

The quarter-century of rejoicing lies behind us, the loud noise of the festivals of victory has died away, and even the most ardent festival orators will have no object for enthusiasm and pathos until the eighteenth of January. This is as it should be; for by copious repetition the formerly stirring word does not gain in force, nor the warning call in efficacy. The German, who attentively feels the pulse of the people, cannot blink the fact that the strengthening of the national feeling, which the glad noise of this summer was to have brought us, has so far remained absent and that the real joyful gladness only becomes apparent during a few fleeting hours. Indifferent, or in dull anger, the multitude holds aloof, to whom is allotted far too small a portion in the enjoyment of our culture, who for the most pitiful of wages has to do the roughest of work, and who therefore does not grow enthusiastic over a development to which it only serves as manure; the working-man who is light-heartedly promised the millennium, flatly denies that he owes anything to the German Empire and to the great war, and in his leisure hours he thinks but of the just complaint, which for many years he has carried about with him, redress for which is ever

deferred with many a hard word. As Freiligrath, after a flamboyant patriotic speech, was questioned by an old, worn-out working man, whether he could provide bread for the poor people, so the festival joy is now being damped by the increasing grumbling of the proletariat, working men, who in heated after-dinner speeches miss the finger-post to a road towards ameliorated conditions of life. The property-owning middle class is split up by conflicting interests, countryman and townsman, producer and dealer, anxiously weighing and only tremblingly daring, measure the forces which they would so much like to unite in the historic fight of the workers against capital, and they do not rejoice in the year of the jubilee, for they feel that they lack a firm leader, and that they cannot subsist in comfort on nothing but great memories. Perhaps the right note had not been struck in the splendid arrangements of the past few months, which with strong vibration could fuse the past and the future; perhaps the enthusiasm of the prologue did not penetrate to the deepest roots of the happiness which it was praising loudly. The pause between the festivals of battle is favourable to a quieter solemnity, that rejoices in the evolution of moral forces, and not in the glitter of bright weapons, and we cannot put it to a better use than by lingering before the picture of the man who lent body and expression to the moral forces of the people's growing consciousness. From the anxious confusion of woefully unfruitful times, from the loathsome scandals, which with disgusting uproar fill our far too public life, the gaze longs for a clearer atmosphere, and turns with affection to the picture of the reverently, and with unostentatious tenderness be-

loved ruler, who in years gone by led Prussia from darkest errors into light. In his features, which awaken in us the pleasant memory, how it had been, and how its development had become possible, we may possibly find an answer to the tormenting question, what we are lacking in and what is necessary for our welfare.

Franz von Lenbach has painted him for us; not the hero, whom later on song and legend will stretch into epic gigantic dimensions, not the superb figure, before which already at this period in an overflow of familiar gratitude, the grandson bows his head,—no: the kindly old man, not William the Victorious, but Old William. The great delineator of the soul, who is able to free the most delicate humanity from the envelope of courtly and military pomp, and to present it to our gaze with a strong touch, has not embellished or falsified the nonagenarian Emperor; long and lovingly he has studied him, and then, without suppressing the wrinkles and crow's feet of old age, he has recreated him from nature with the bold courage of a genius. Thus, with his somewhat fatigued, but still perfectly erect carriage, with the slightly dimmed and yet cautiously scrutinising look, he lives in our consciousness; thus with a touch of tired, resigned sadness, which however could not obscure the innate cheerfulness of his soldierly nature, hundreds of thousands saw him at the corner window of his unpretentious house when the guard was changed, and the kindly earnestness of his eye seemed to say to the cheering multitude: To such strapping lads as these you owe the Empire and the capital of the Empire; have a care that another generation may not be wanting to take their place, and

do not forget, after the mischievous habit of laughing heirs, at what sacrifice our greatness had to be bought. Even the older generation knew him no differently; did the sudden heat of youth never seize him, or has no trace of his youthfulness been preserved even in anecdotes? Aged and wise he regards us: a man who quietly waits till the destined time arrives, and holds himself in readiness, that the hour of fate may find him prepared. This is not the manner of very great men. Great men master time, they resist with their powerful personality the wheel of history, they break, if but for a brief period only, the chain of developments and lead in a masterful fashion, by self-discovered paths, to a good or a bad end. Great men become either the happiness or the black doom of the peoples whom they force under the ban of their individuality, and no sentient being can pass their picture without an impulsive emotion of passionate affection or of fierce hatred. Our old Emperor was not of the race of such great men; homage is rendered him with gentle tenderness, as to a father, and whoever wants to hate him has to distort his noble figure into something vulgar; even Herr Auer, the leader of the North German social democracy, and a very keen judge of human nature, in a much-maligned and too little-heeded speech in the Reichstag, called him a plain, quiet, frugal, and peace-loving gentleman. When history comes to sift the citizens' century, she will probably decorate but two among the politicians with the epithet, the Great: Bonaparte and Bismarck, the dark and the luminous exponent of revolution, the fanatic conqueror and the sober builder of states. Greatness cannot be awarded by decree; however often in official documents William

the Great is mentioned, the designation sounds too proud, has not a ring of sufficient sincerity, ever to become popular. Only he appears great to us, whom no greater overtowers,—and the old Emperor never left any doubt that he considered himself the grateful debtor of a greater one. May song and legend, which already now, after but a century, have white-washed the figure of the aged scoffer of Sanssouci, raise him some day among the legendary row of Germanic war kings: to us he lives, as Lenbach's artist's eye beheld him, and as he, like Nestor, died in splendid glory. William the Great: it sounds far too ceremonious, recalling outward pomp and circumstance, too dreadfully historical, as though a whole world lay already between him and us, to whom, after all, as a beloved shadow, he is still present at every hour. We prefer the more intimate name which Bismarck in affectionate memory was fond of giving him, and in childlike attachment we call him Old William. This name groups him with Old Fritz and Old Blücher, and in their company he will probably feel more at home than with Alexander and Bonaparte.

It would be very foolish to consider him small or insignificant on that account. When Hamlet has seen Fortinbras he realises that true greatness consists only in this: not to move without a great object, but valiantly to defend even a straw when honour demands it. According to this axiom William the First has acted throughout the whole of his life; and it is not a question of measurement, but of sentiment, whether he is to be called the Great. Neither does the strenuous man, who six hundred years before him was chosen German Emperor, even Rudolf von Habsburg does not bear in history the title of the Great: and

he too has accomplished great things, and lives as the typical representative of an era in the memory of men. Rudolf no longer belonged to the circle of saints and heroes that had been peopled by the Ottos and the Salic kings, he was also no longer a merry Staufen knight, no man of cheerful blows and amusing fights of giants; he was a clever and cool calculator, the best major-domo in his country, homely, saving, moderate, of the utmost caution in the expression of any emotion, and yet at heart possessed of the peasant's merry cunning. As he, foreboding his death, was riding to Spires, it is said, according to a poetically transfigured tradition, that the people thronged up on all sides once more to behold the features of their dear one. This would have meant bidding farewell not merely to a human being, but to an epoch. And such sorrowful parting we too have experienced and suffered in the spring of the year 1888. The densely-packed multitude, which then like a flock of scared fowl surrounded the monument of Old Fritz and with anxiously bated breath waited for news of Old William, clearly felt: There slips away from us an era, there arises the New, the Unknown. The departing period had not gratified all wishes, and many hopes were centred in the New; but the serenity vanished, the safe continuity of development seemed endangered, and anxious care mingled with the human mourning.

The old Emperor had been the surety of repose; with him there were no surprises, no hasty resolutions, no suddenly erupted moods. He was, like Rudolf, a prudent and careful calculator, but of the rougher, harder, and at the same time warmer nature of the best Hohenzollern; a true son of the period

of Kant's 'Law of Duty,' but also the son of the gentle mother Luise. Frederick had sipped too freely of the Voltairean spirit, of the piquant fare of the rationalists and encyclopædists; he scoffed at God, who seemed to him to have an easy job at the head of the strongest squadrons, and the world relied on him to cut valiantly with his lads through all entanglements into which ambition and recklessness might ever lead him. The Prussian people and the German race, who did not come up to his ideal and whose deepest emotions he did not understand, he despised, and no firm, durable chain linked him to the era that was in the making; he was the great, glittering, and sparklingly genial personality, but his creations lacked the warranty of a lasting existence, as they were not founded on the forces of the period which were pressing through to the light. Frederick William the Fourth was a child of the dawn, a man afraid of the light, who planned great things in the dark, and who stood blinking and trembling in the daylight; he was too clever to be certain; he saw things from too many points of view to be able to progress with a sure foot; the romancer's fate overtook him, and after magnificent preliminary runs, he broke down, worn out and tired, a useless man. In his brother the elements were more happily blended. The King and Emperor William was no heroic son of the sun, no scoffer, no dreamer. He had been endowed with that wholesome limitation that alone begets firmness of will; nothing human was foreign to him; he loved light amusements, the gay dance, and the beauty of graceful women; and from his portrait the trait of simplicity of mind must no more be missing than the pleasure in gallant dally-

ing. His picture needs no deceptive retouching, for he always suppressed everything that was too human within him: his personal inclination never got the upper hand over the ruler—and so one can love the man to whose individuality rigid limits had been drawn, and can admire the monarch who was more dispersonal than any other before him, and served his high office to the best of his abilities, without allowing inclination or whim any arbitrary interference. Frederick had called himself, chuckling presumably, the first servant of the State, and Frederick William had feared, certainly quite honestly, that even a sheet of paper might loosen the hearty communion between himself and his people; nevertheless, both were strangers to the people's affections, distant gentlemen, who in prosperity are fawned upon and in adversity cursed. William, the soldier prince, the offspring of stark feudalism, became the first King of the Continental democracy—not a bourgeois king, like Louis Philippe, not a business man and speculator like the Belgian Leopold, but a citizen the King remained, the confidential friend and adviser of the nation, supported by the love of his people, and fully conscious of the responsibility of his office. He has created a new type of monarch, the type of the monarch in a changed era. The man who succeeded in such a creation was surely not a small one.

How did he succeed? One would have to write a century of Prussian history to explain adequately this happy dispensation of Providence. Prince William of Prussia happened to live in that century, and he learnt from it indefatigably, to his last breath a modest student of history. He had experienced misery and ignominy, and learnt from them that

one must provide also for dark days, and gather in days of brightness a store of confidence and affection, which in adversity will satisfy the hungering. How a weak government loses the lead of the people, he had observed, and how an unsteady Will-o'-the-wisp government causes confusion—and he had discovered the lesson: that rising forces, beneficial or noxious, must be recognised early, and guided betimes, lest later on they force him who should have led them, into humiliating compliance. Applause and the phantom of sudden popularity did not tempt him who, for long years in patient silence, had borne the deadly hatred of the red gang of yore; whatever post he happened to occupy, fearlessly and staunchly he did his duty, hoped for future justice, not for the noisy goodwill of the masses, and soon perceived how smoothly even that frequently straightens out which has originated in wild confusion. He had impressed upon himself that it is dangerous to blow into the flame, and that a man high in rank must never lower himself to the petty passions of the hour. As a soldier he was accustomed to discipline—who can obey well, will also be able to command well,—but also to quick decisions, steady guidance, and to doing his duty unerringly. Later on he used to say that up to his ripe manhood he had troubled little about affairs of State, but had really only learnt correctly to lead a division of infantry. At the right moment it showed itself that this military drilling was the best basis for an education as monarch, a far better one than, for instance, the promiscuous nibbling from all kinds of dishes. He had become independent in this school, no cheering or reviling roaring affected him, but he had also learnt, that within the ranks all contradic-

tion must be suppressed, and that the word of command must be obeyed without a murmur. The federal constitution, the affair of Olmütz, Prussia's attitude during the Crimean War, and many other matters were not in accord with his ideas, and the Camarilla, the Parliamentary factions with Gerlach's following, did not please him at all. But he bowed to the command, forced down his scruples, and left the decision with God. For in his heart he was pious, a good Christian, and a true Protestant; he never boasted of his faith, which to him was the most sacred matter; he was no hypocrite, no braggart, and the tendency for making propaganda was never strong in him; his relationship with God was to him an entirely personal affair, not to be looked into by any stranger; but this faith in God was the daily bread of his life; it gave him the courage to advance, the strength for being resigned, and the possibility to follow his motto: Forgive everything and forget nothing. When he, surely with no light heart, took over the regency, one of his first official duties was to sign a patent of appointment to some post in the province of Posen, of a literary man named Lindenberg; the discredited man, a vindictive slanderer, had agitated against the Prince of Prussia, but the Regent knew of no hesitation, and signed the appointment without a word. Later on, when murderous scoundrels attempted his life, not a hard or irate word of condemnation fell from his lips; he was merely a tool in the hand of God, the hand of God would wisely protect him and guide him. Yet all fatalism was entirely foreign to him. It is a mistake to imagine that he was dragged to fame almost against his will. The army reform, without

which the greatness of Prussia is unthinkable, was a measure of his very own; and that he recognised early the national problem is proved by a letter, written in spring 1849, to General Natzmer: "Whoever wants to govern Germany must conquer it; after the manner of Gagern it simply cannot be done. Whether the time for this unity has arrived yet, God alone knows. That Prussia is destined to take up the lead in Germany is obvious from our whole history—but as to the When and the How? All depends on that." When a decision had been come to as to the When and the How, he stood ready and fully armed. The practical sense for what is right had safely guided him, the matter-of-fact calm which does not recoil even from bitter truth had saved him great disappointments, and the most important talent of a ruler, the aptitude to read people, had won for him the best advisers. The man who, at the age of sixty, with a defective education, had ascended the throne, had listened well, worked indefatigably, and learnt much; he only followed his conscientiously weighed conviction, but even as an old man he never fought shy of learning, and his whole endeavours were devoted to acquiring so much knowledge, that he made further information accessible and that he should know the right source from which to obtain it. To him, not tainted with the least vestige of Olympian self-consciousness, it came easy to appreciatively acknowledge recognised efficiency, and gratitude was to him a heartfelt necessity. He must have experienced that the best servants, the strongest, are not the most convenient and easiest, but he gladly submitted to any inconvenience or friction as being within the bargain, for

to him the best for the welfare of the whole which he had to govern was just good enough, and he would never have forgiven himself, if from some sensitive mood he had dispensed with proved and faithful help. Thus he became the providential man, the King, who was necessary to a changed Prussia after a period of cloudy fermentation—thus he could become German Emperor.

His historical importance reaches far beyond the boundaries of the German Empire. In the words of Jhering, at a time when the peoples' tendencies were turning more and more away from monarchy, he restored it to an honourable position, gave it a new moral support and a strengthening, which made debtors to him for ever not only of the wearers of crowns, but also of the nations round about. He has shown that one can be strong and yet remain quiet, firmly hold one's inheritance and yet at the same time adapt oneself to the changes of the period; that a ruler, without dwindling into a mere shadow, need never assert his dignity over trivialities. In the hard school of misfortune and strict soldierly training he experienced, that even from the highest, the people's consciousness, which must not be mistaken for public opinion, may demand respect and attention, and that confidence is not to be won by honeyed words, as an amorous maiden by some hot-blooded youth. Three great wars he carried to a victorious close; but he would, even at the head of a beaten army, once his people knew him and he knew the people, have remained their beloved king.

In the confusion of dismally unfruitful times, the picture of the gentle and yet so powerful recruiting

officer for the precious living contents of a monarchy, may serve as a reminder to peoples and princes, that their prosperity under any sky lacks the warranty of continuance, if they are not certain that they can withstand upright, without fear of just reproach, the catastrophe of an impending disaster.

EMPRESS FREDERICK

Victoria Adelaide Mary Louise, Princess Royal of England (*born* November 21, 1840; *died* August 5, 1901). Married on January 25, 1858, the German Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm von Preussen, subsequently Emperor Frederick III. (*born* October 18, 1831, in Berlin; *died* June 15, 1888). *Children:* Wilhelm, the present Emperor William II. (*born* January 27, 1859); Charlotte (*born* July 24, 1860), married to the Hereditary Prince of Saxe-Meiningen; Heinrich, Prince Henry of Prussia (*born* August 14, 1862); Victoria (*born* April 12, 1866), married to Prince Adolf von Schaumburg-Lippe; Sophie (*born* June 14, 1870), married to the Crown Prince Constantine of Greece; and Margareta (*born* April 22, 1872), married to Prince Frederick Charles of Hesse. Two children died: Sigismund (*born* 1864; *died* June 18, 1866), and Waldemar (*born* 1868; *died* March 17, 1879).

EMPRESS FREDERICK

As by a wind blowing from the icy mountain-tops of a strange world of tragedy, so the sultry stagnation of everyday life was disturbed by the news that the German Emperor's mother was doomed, irretrievably doomed to die. For a long time past, for more than a year, it had been known that her days were numbered; and in the early spring it was whispered that the sufferer would never see the fall of the leaf. Such long-drawn-out certainty dulls the senses as a rule; and the tidings that the daughter of an Empress, the widow of an Emperor, and the mother of an Emperor is on the point of death, are usually received without a shudder. Nor did the thought occur: Here we see the struggle of a flickering will against a disease, the destructive effect of which it knows thoroughly, and the progress of which, now slow, now swift, it has investigated under tormenting pain and observed at the bedside of a loved one. The Crown Princess Victoria had learned to fear the indomitable power, the mysterious malignity of cancer, and not the faintest symptom in the clinical development of this disease had escaped her observation; the widow of the Emperor Friedrich now saw herself, felt herself,

dying, however often the doctors, with smiling faces, assured her that she was mistaken as to the nature of her illness. To think of this was sad. But the real tragedy lay in the contemplation of the human destiny that had come to an end. With the force of a tragedy this drama affects us: how a powerful will is shattered against the cliffs of rough actuality. Whoever has experienced it, forgets how to laugh for a while. And if the venue of such a fate be an Emperor's palace, and the will one that deals with the large affairs of human life, then the onlooker must shudder; he feels like a timid bourgeois who has ventured into a strange inferno of tragic poetry, and as though he were compelled to sit, he, the small tradesman, whose greatest sorrow in life hitherto has been perhaps the failure of a bank, at a high festive board between Jocasta and Lady Macbeth. Such is not the sentiment of the neo-German wedding-wail, of the neo-German burial rejoicing. The heroine of, temporarily, the last of German poets, who with the wide view of a foreboding eye contemplated the world of the ancient Teutons, Hebbel's Kriemhilde is recalled to mind, in her black widow's weeds, wedded to but one thought, one recurring wish, who died the death of her spouse, succumbed to the same fate as the warrior, peacefully confident after victory. . . . But already we hear of hussars, constables, patrols, of fended-off gardens, wisely devised regulations of dress, and of compulsory mourning. Quickly we pull ourselves together: we are at home, in newest Germany, close to phrase-makers and decorators; the tragedy atmosphere is dispelled; in a world, devoid of wonders, we quickly forget how to wonder. We read, without a single twitch of the eyelid, what we have often read before in necrologies

of every princess and every prince, of every leader of armies, and of every mandarin: distinguished by the noblest qualities of heart and brain, a clear, spotless giant figure, whom love, nought but love, accompanies to the grave. Carefully all traces of humanity are wiped out; and where the deeper print of a human foot cannot immediately be obliterated, the rake is used with consummate skill, and gravel strewn with a liberal hand: *de mortuis nil nisi bene.* Thus the moonstruck longing of the people to worship none but gods is appeased. Unfortunately, the gods are dead; and after a brief period of inquisitive contemplation, the people go their way without even as much as securing a keepsake. In olden times, on occasions of dynastic festival days, bright or gloomy, freshly minted coins were distributed, which a father would bequeath to his son; to-day, around triumphal arches or by the side of catafalques, the bursars fling worn-out greasy small coin among the crowd—just enough to pay in the nearest inn for a "silent glass." Brainless deification and the grey misery of a beer-fuddle do not beget the true atmosphere of tragedy.

And yet the shadows created by the great poets of the world of tragedy are not so easily banished this time. In sombre black the strong women who sprang from the brain of the ancient Greeks, of the Anglo-Saxons, and of the Frisians, crowd around the decorated bier, and summon the dead Empress from out of the empty pomp to join in their stately measure. And Gunther's sister utters the first word, who, as a means towards the desired end, allowed herself, after Siegfried had been murdered, to be embraced by Etzel. The consort of the Emperor Friedrich experienced much of the fate of Kriemhilde. All her life she

seemed to be cheated out of the fulfilment of her one desire; and when eventually her life's wish after all was granted, she had to die.

Very little different from a horde of savages the Prussian people must have appeared to the British woman when she was conducted to their capital on a dull day in February by Prince Friedrich Wilhelm. The year was 1858, darkest reaction was the topic of conversation, and the horrors of Olmütz were still fresh. A very brave, but as yet quite uncultivated people, politically in a state of helpless infancy, economically undeveloped, with a reputation for ineradicable coarseness, inclined to be proud before the fall, but without the quiet assurance of a national pride—a poor, backward people whom the Englishman smilingly despised, and whose brightest intellects in blind faith adored everything British. The great secret had not as yet been revealed: Britain was still regarded as the sanctuary of liberty, as the home of the Right of Man, untrammelled and unfettered. Only much later, when Marx had been heard and Bucher had talked out of the parliamentary school, it gradually dawned upon the Continent that no clean, light, and airy Palace to Liberty and the Rights of Man had been erected here, but that a governmental institution had been created according to the requirements of a young industry and an old-world commerce, a new—or at any rate modernised—form of social serfdom; that it was not Rousseau, but Hobbes who reigned over the minds. At that time the insinuating spell of Cobden, Gladstone, and Bright was still effective, the domain of the Union Jack still the land of promise and the Island of the Blessed. And, indeed,

was not this country ahead in many things, from Magna Charta to the large washhand basins? Everything was bound to displease the young Princess in her new home: the defective personal care—a bath in winter was to a Prussian citizen in those days an adventure,—the fulness of the adipose, hideously ageing bodies, which still strikes the Englishman to-day, the low level of political discussions, the unenticing squalor everywhere. Where were the meadows and lawns, on the luscious verdure of which even the children of poverty could romp about merrily and steel themselves for the battle of life; where the trips on the river, whiling away entire days of voluntary leisure; the troops of well-dressed men and women, the result of decades of careful grooming, who can be seen daily, not only in Hyde Park, but in English provincial towns; where the good old manners of Westminster in the House of these deputies, alternately bellowing or whining? A narrow, dirty river, narrow streets with open gutters, rarely a green spot within the municipality, small shopkeepers who timidly lower their gaze at the sight of any military uniform, and an idolatry, unknown to the Briton, of priests and even custodians of the state, of the whole swarm of right honourable officialdom. Princess Victoria must have felt like a harbinger of culture in a country of savages, and as such she was greeted by the people. For a long time the English had kept Prince Albert von Koburg waiting ere they accorded him the honours due to the Prince Consort, and ere they graciously pardoned him his fatherland and his German provincial manners. And this Prince's daughter, on showing herself for the first time to the intelligent inhabitants of Berlin, was vociferously

acclaimed as the bestower of the highest blessings, not in spite of being, but because she was, a stranger, because she hailed from that country of unequalled hereditary wisdom, the asylum of those suffering for their faith, the world-famed monster factory of all peoples' welfare. This fervent admiration of Albion's glories served to unite the politically separate strata of the capital. The demented King in his saner days had been in a heaven of delight, if his illustrious cousin waved a graceful greeting across the Channel, and when acting as sponsor at the christening in London, he had felt as awkward as a horny-handed artisan in the dining-hall of a millionaire. The Prince of Prussia as refugee had found shelter abroad, and gratefully thought of the Koburg Prince as a very wealthy, very wise relative, who, if necessity arises, will kindly look after even the poor, none too reputable members of his family. And everyone with any claim to modern culture waxed enthusiastic about Great Britain, the firmest bulwark against tyrannical power, the self-conscious whale sunning himself, whom in the East even the Polar bear had learned to fear, and pushed and squeezed up close to the bridal carriage, by which blessing was entering the town. But on the silken cushions sat a girl, eighteen years old, an English educated miss with a sharp ear and a clear, sober eye. Instantly she must have felt: Here there are no thanks claimed because the road has been cleared for me to a throne, rich in glory, the throne of Fritz; here ecstasy stammers up prayers of gratitude to heaven because I, a Briton, the English Queen's eldest daughter, have the condescending grace to dwell among Prussians, and promise graciously some day to occupy the throne of Prussia. Was it not

natural that one, received with such whining, should gird herself with the whole pride of her England?

She did it; and remained to the people always the "Engländerin," just as Marie Antoinette to the inhabitants of France and Navarre always had been the "Autrichienne." But the admiration for Great British glory, deaf to the language of facts, did not last for ever. The year 1858 was succeeded by '64, '66, '70, and Olmütz was followed by Düppel, Königgrätz, Sedan. The national pride of the Germans, apparently welded to an indestructible union, raised its head again, after a long slumber, and in an anthem, sung from Mörchingen to Memel, Germany was placed "*über Alles in der Welt*" (above everything in the world). With astonishment the peoples round about heard it; none of them had ever in song or saga vaulted to such self-consciousness. And now there also was roused a suspicion of everything foreign, dangerous to the nascent national consciousness, against French, Poles, English, Jews. German they would be, thoroughly German "to the very bones"; and the Old-Prussians, with much of the blood of the Wends in their veins, were *Germanis ipsis Germaniores*. The Crown Princess, with sensitive nerve, felt the coming of a new wind; she knew why she urged her consort to reprove very severely the anti-semitic movement, her husband, who *tête-à-tête* with Pastor von Bodelschwingh had uttered some very hard words about the sons of Shem. The ground which was shaking under this movement was also for her a very unstable foothold. She, more especially she, dared not permit the German to be questioned as to his descent, and weighed accordingly; for she wanted to be an Englishwoman, and

to remain an Englishwoman, and even with a closed eye she saw the lurking, dubious gaze of the fanatic inveterate Teutons directed towards herself. Does she not speak English, calls herself Vicky, the eldest son William or Willy? Does she not draw into her entourage English divines, artists, scientists, servants? Does she not wear costumes of English cut? Does she not drink tea in her drawing-room, instead of sitting in the parlour over the coffee-pot, according to German housewifely custom, and does she not have English cooks to prepare cake, pudding, jam, and pie? Even asparagus has to be served up green, and throughout the whole house scarcely ever a German word is heard. And that is the household of our Fritz, the fair-haired, blue-eyed Hohenzollern, whom everyone diagnoses at once as "made in Germany."

Thus went the gossip from mouth to mouth; and worse was whispered into eager ears. The liberal era had brought in its train a considerable portion of British "freedom," the German burgher had acquired money and repute, he felt his feet, and began to fear that the Englishwoman might spoil for him his dynasty, which he wished to preserve purely German, as in its young Nürnberg days. In vain did the Crown Princess endeavour to show herself to the multitude as an industrious German housewife at Bornstedt, Potsdam, Berlin, to visit people's kitchens, to treat the smaller fry at bazaars to idiomatic phrases and words, and to open wide the door to the princely nursery, and to drag forth from an old lumber-room a supposedly old-German industry of applied art: love's labour was lost; to the citizens of her new home, a German father notwithstanding, she remained the Englishwoman.

. . . . . .

Beside the first husband she now rests in the Friedenskirche, which the living woman, since she discarded her widow's weeds, had scarcely ever entered. What had to be kept secret by the side of the open coffin may now be said. The people's instinct had not erred this time: Viktoria von Preussen, even on the throne of the German Emperor, remained "die Engländerin." This is not meant as a reproach, much less as a depreciation of her worth. On the contrary, one must praise the woman who was strong enough to preserve intact the manners of her kind, and clever enough not to sever herself from the nourishing root. That blood is thicker than water is an old adage; but the most exquisite liquid shows according to weight and mixture distinct differences to the examining eye. In the alliance which united Victoria and Albert, the woman was stronger than the man, the British woman born to the throne, stronger than the insanely overrated phrase-maker of Koburg, who was in such a hurry to divest himself of his nationality, and with all methods of conscious mimicry to assimilate himself to the peers and princes of England. The spectacle is unfortunately no new one: expatriated Germans are constantly Anglicising or Americanising themselves in hordes; but nobody ever yet saw a Briton or a Yankee who became a German, or would even only appear a German. This will not be altered until the German has acquired a uniformity of culture, the tradition of which will suffice for the whole field of his emotions; meanwhile he only remains German in cases where he segregates forbiddingly against anything foreign: in Bohemia, on the Volga, and in

the Brazilian village colonies. The Crown Princess of Prussia—and a glance at her progeny will prove it—showed a distinct trace of her Guelph-Koburg patrimony; but with a stronger beat the British blood coursed through her veins. She certainly was kindly disposed towards the country of her children, but she regarded it from outside, as a fresh arrival, whom no weakness and no rotten spot escapes, not with the tender leniency of the native, who has imbibed his love for his motherland at his mother's breast. And is she, who was born in 1840 in Buckingham Palace, to be seriously reproached for not being able to realise that the German Empire as a State had the same right, and on the globe the same power as Great Britain? While she was growing up, there existed no Germany, there was no tangible political entity covered by that name; and since Jena the husky voice of Prussia was ignored like the yelping of a troublesome puppy, or at best listened to with an air of condescension as to the entreaties of a poor relative. When the great days of the German battles arrived, and amidst the thunder of cannon, from long separated countries the Empire was born, Victoria thought that this young creature ought to be brought up in accordance with the well-tried recipes of English pedagogy, like other children by a nursery governess. That would be best for it and the dynasty. For the British woman only smiled when told that England's rulers were but impotent shadow kings. She had seen what her mother could do, whether it was Peel, Disraeli, or Gladstone, who seemed to be holding the reins unrestricted, and knew that since the days of the Stuarts and before, every strong ruler on the throne of England, the Parliamentary spectre

notwithstanding, had carried the sum and substance of his will. Like most women she was quite unable to understand the necessity for organic development. Why not take the good where you found it, why not import to Germany what had been proved useful in the island kingdom? Just as she called into ill-fated life an industry which met no requirements of the Germans of to-day, as she was enthusiastic about "old-German" pannelling, heavy chairs, chests, &c., which might have been suitable enough for castles of the Renaissance, but were of no use in the narrow casual lodgings of the modern Nomads, so she thought she could furnish the German Empire after the British style, and never reflected that in a soil and under a sky where for centuries past firs had grown, a harvest of bananas could not reasonably be expected from to-day to to-morrow. Whatever went against the English grain annoyed her. Because in England the venerable trumpery of medieval ceremonial always was of great importance, she wished to secure the blessings of such habits for the country of her children. Inseparably the new Germany was to be identified with the old Holy Roman Empire of German Nationality. That is why she held with the title of Emperor, with the whole pomp of faded empire, with a coronation after the style followed in the days of the electors; that is why she had the feudal seat of the old Saxon Emperors placed in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. Since in England two parties, representatives of the nobility and gentry with equal rights, relieve each other in the Government in turns, she could not understand why in Prussian Germany it should not now at last be the Liberals' turn to govern. Well did she know these German Liberals,

merchants, industrials, engineers, dissatisfied politicians, whose business tendency and malcontent favoured development on English lines; among these the Crown Princess, feeling somewhat lonely among the Old-Prussians, had found her strongest support; among them only was she really popular, was she still a hope after the great war. These people—a clever woman could not ignore the fact—were not dangerous to the German Crown; it would be easier to govern with them than with the Junkers; they would be content if they were petted, and would never kick over the traces were they once admitted to court, as officers in the army or as high Government officials. Once freed from the irritating atmosphere of fruitless opposition, if they experienced the joy of sitting in the King's Council, then would the spell be broken that since the forties had lain on Germany's north. Then could young hands commence to reconstruct the new house, widen the hall, let light and air into every corner; and where yesterday rubbish-heaps raised their melancholy heads, tomorrow there would be meadows as green as at Richmond, and as carefully tended as at the widow's residence on the Isle of Wight. The watchword then would be: Every merit its reward, every just claim fulfilment! In place of a senseless and no longer useful hereditary friendship with retrograde Muscovites, a union would be formed of two kindred nations, with England as the leading head, and Germany as the strong harnessed arm, which no White Tsar's power could affect henceforth. Then would Victoria reign by the side of Friedrich over a free people, who by vigorous industry increase the national wealth, worshipped by them as their adored Empress.

To reign! That was the great hope of the politically uncommonly gifted woman. From the point of view of a dynastic degree of rank, her marriage had been no "great catch," the British woman had descended into the house of Prussia; but this marriage offered an important problem. England had always meant very well by Prussia, in George's as in Castlereagh's days, at the Peace of Rastatt as at the Peace of Paris, and still meant well by it at the time of the nascent German explications. When Frederick William IV. came to London to act as godfather to Albert's first son, the late King Edward VII., and was devoutly kneeling in St Paul's Cathedral, he was instructed impressively, in a magisterial tone, as to his duties. He should, said the Press, said Lord Brougham in the House of Lords, follow the example of British monarchical wisdom and without delay grant the constitution which his father had already promised. Such solicitude for the weal of the Prussians was touching; only we, who have lived to hear the English noise over Bulgarian and Armenian atrocities, are no longer grateful for it. For we know: England only troubles about the fate of the peoples whom she hopes to be able to use as a bulwark against Russia; such countries she wishes to gladden with modern institutions to alienate them more and more from Muscovite influence. Prussia, which had preserved the nimbus of its deeds of arms since the days of Frederick and Blücher, might become the sword of England on the Continent; for this purpose some development was necessary which tore the Hohenzollern State from the Russian friendship. As yet, revolution and reaction notwithstanding, everything had remained fundamentally as of old, and English publicists could sneer at Berlin and Pots-

dam for smelling of Russian leather. All this would be changed if a Queen of British blood freed the people from feudal fetters. And according to human calculations it could not be long before Victoria ascended the Prussian throne. The King incurably ill, the Prince of Prussia old and unpopular: the longed-for hour must soon strike. The readiness is all. Frederick William, who, indeed, was soon called Crown Prince, had to be influenced by the Anglophiles, Stockmar, Bunsen, and colleagues; everywhere he had to acknowledge liberal sentiments, and although it was entirely against all Prussian tradition, he was made to proclaim openly against regulations laid down by his father. He loved pomp, and he had to appear a plain bourgeois; he was very proud, and had to be condescending and affable. Was intended to, and had to be. For this handsome man with the build and head of a Germanic hero of war displayed in relation to his wife a charming and amiable weakness. To be allowed to call her his own he considered unmerited bliss; her descent, her spirit, most of all perhaps her indomitable will he admired early and late with thankful upward gaze of his soft eye; what she did was well done; that she, the best wife and mother, should be misunderstood and maligned, hurt him deeply; and to secure for her in the eyes of posterity the nimbus of a Mæcenas, the otherwise proud and self-conscious King's son did not hesitate to beg of Gustav Freytag to dedicate to her, his cycle of novels, "Die Ahnen." Thus she ruled in the house, and this state of affairs seemed quite natural to Victoria's daughter, who, like Maria Theresa's luckless child, had, from childhood, been brought up in an atmosphere of woman's government. And she waited

until a wider sphere for her activities should be opened up to her masterly will.

She did not waste her time. The children she educated according to her own wishes, fashioned on the British-Koburg pattern. The home she kept in model order, although means were none too plentiful, and the father-in-law was very strict in money matters. And noiselessly she collected a following, a congregation of hopefuls, who followed her standard. The post of the quietly liberalising princess, who must not be absent from any Court, she had found already occupied. But Augusta, the "Firehead," as her husband used to call her with a sigh, was really too old-fashioned, too much imbued with the Little-German spirit of Weimar, too much under the influence of the customary Crown Princes' policy. Heirs to a throne—and more especially their wives—are always seized with shuddering horror after a first glance into the black kitchen of politics; they cannot understand why things should be so unclean, and only realise gradually that even for nations no cake can be baked without the breaking of eggs, and that the politician must rest content, in line with Goethe's Machiavellian advice, to wash his hands afterwards. Augusta under the crown saw that speedily, and afterwards really only gave vent to her anger against the hated Minister's power; she had Habsburg tendencies when Bismarck no longer dared avoid the war against Austria; became enthusiastic about everything French, when he overthrew the Empire; and indulged in Catholic tendencies when the "Kulturkampf" drove Protestantism at length into protesting again. A definite plan of governing, a political outlook on the world, she did not possess;

she only wanted to be asked her advice, and was easily annoyed if ignored, and when she was annoyed the ground shook at the Frederick monument, at Koblenz, and at Babelsberg. Viktoria was of a totally different stamp; to the Englishwoman, robust in body and mind, the mother-in-law's methods were as little sympathetic as her nervously flickering, ailing personality. She wanted to act, did not wish for the appearance, but for power itself, the lustreless power as a means to her aim in life. She looked around her. What was wanting in Prussia? Obviously every kind of intimacy between the reigning house and the powers that moulded the period. The old King was a soldier. Among scientists and artists he did not feel comfortable, and though Augusta was fond of talking of Goethe, whose hand had rested on her head when a child, she had not conjured up for the Marches an Augustan era. Here was scope for the impetus of the Crown Princess. Her artistic taste is praised to-day only by the Byzantines and the purse-proud world of the upstarts, who, surrounded by furniture of the Renaissance, imagine themselves lords of the castle; she was fond of the smooth pretty-pretty brushwork of painters like Angeli and Werner, and implored the art dealer Gurlitt not to exhibit to the public the truly human portrait of her husband by Lenbach, because it was "too ugly." As an amateur in various arts, she had lost the genuine respect for art, insisted on mastering the masters, and hampered their creative progress by directions and corrections. Nevertheless it must be remembered with gratitude, that she for the first time was instrumental in again acclimatising artists at a court of the Hohenzollern. And she attracted into her surroundings the leading scholars, men like Helm-

holtz, Virchow, Dubois, and knew on the whole how to hide the angular sharp corners of a military monarchy under flowers, and how to diffuse around her a stimulating atmosphere of a more unrestricted mental intercourse. She never penetrated to the root of any social question, never even to the earnest aim of the women's movement. Nevertheless she has frequently shown the proper appreciation for what was wanted at a given period. She knew the power of sounding words, spoke in public always in good German, and to a certainty assisted in inspiring Frederick's beautifully worded order for a national mourning, as well as Geffcken's draft for the first Imperial greetings to the people and the army. She saw that it was to her own interest to meet half way the demands of the modern elements. Since most of the trump cards, on which she had counted, had already been played, the German races united, the restriction of suffrage removed, industries sprung up in northern and southern centres, fresh sources tapped for the increase of the national wealth, this at least should be known: under Viktoria's sceptre the sciences, the arts will flourish, it will be a pleasure also for the citizen, who is a brain-worker, to live in Prussian Germany. . . . For thirty long years, without ever tiring, she built up a throne that should carry her plan, for thirty years she awaited in preparedness the hour of fate. Who will throw a stone at the woman for becoming impatient because her strong intentions were never allowed to develop into deeds?

She was not spared the stones. And whoever has to wait too long, easily becomes impatient. Year by year her interest in German development decreased, until finally nothing pleased her any longer, and she—and

with her her husband—become totally alienated from the politics of Wilhelm and Bismarck. She feared that the soil on which she wished to sow might be spoiled, and the harvest of her hopes destroyed, and did not conceal her grievances from the faithful, who in whispers repeated every word of her rising indignation. Moreover, she saw passing away by her side the man whom she loved, not only as a husband and the father of her children; nay, also as the executor of her will to rule. No deception was possible; he was bound to die. And the physician, whom in the anguish of her heart the wife summoned from her island home, as well as the pathological anatomist who assisted him, were confronted with a political problem; a cure, once the cancer had become virulent, was out of the question, but the life of the sufferer could be prolonged. It was surely of no moment to the Crown Princess to be the Empress of a dying man, and it is foolish to charge her with personal ambition. Was it not a blessing for our inner consciousness, for the whole genesis of the German Empire, that to Wilhelm, even if for a few days only, there succeeded Friedrich, that this hope of the younger generation, and of those Germans who distrusted Prussian methods, should not go to his grave uncrowned? Or would anyone like to miss from the store cupboards of his memory the figure of the Emperor, on whose tomb the poet of the March, Theodor Fontane, wrote :—

> "Thou did'st but come thy office great to view,
> Thou had'st no time to build or to renew,
> No time to leave on time thy mark so bright,—
> Thou had'st but time to shed one ray of light."

The daughter of the British Queen had never been

beautiful. Now, in the days of her deepest sorrow, the head, worn out with worry, yet lit up with a determination to conquer, seemed almost handsome. By the side of her gaunt, livid husband, who no longer could speak, but simply looked around with a smile, sat the wife; and from out of her steely glittering eye there gazed an uncurbed will, ready for any contingency, into the spring-clad world. And the same unmovable determination in the darker glance of the black-clad physician, whose yellow clergyman's face peered lurkingly from among the cushions of the next Court carriage. Through the Park of Sanssouci drove the sorrowful procession, to Bornstedt, to the New Garden, to Alt-Geltow; on one occasion even as far as Berlin. The people were to behold the Emperor. If kept hidden at Charlottenburg or Friedrichskron, and outside enthusiastic cheers greeted the Crown Prince William at the head of the troops, the British woman may have been reminded of Shakespeare's Fourth Henry, who on his last awakening found the crown on his son's young head. And the Emperor Frederick raised his hand to his helmet and smiled pleasantly like a convalescent. . . . Then dawned the morn in June, when at the edge of the Wildpark the purple standard was lowered, and the house of death was surrounded by mounted soldiery and constabulary. A few hours later Sir Morell Mackenzie was closeted with the Emperor and the Chancellor. The sun shone brightly. Victoria had been left a widow.

When Bismarck, in the white tunic of the Halberstadt Cuirassiers, walked from the Castle to the Wildpark railway station, thick tears were running down his heated face. When Victoria, dressed in

English widow's weeds, either alone or with her daughters, or attended by Count Seckendorff and a lackey, mixed again among people her eye was dry, her carriage erect, and in her look the old determination. The arrows and slings of a furious fate she had borne; the stones thrown by the multitude, who more than ever saw in her the alien, and partly blamed her, the Englishwoman, for the early demise of Frederick, had recoiled ineffectively from the iron ore of her will. Was the little woman in black really stronger than the massive giant in the white horseman's tunic?

Perhaps. He who bears the responsibility for the fate of a great empire, who every morning must select from new possibilities the necessary, who with fresh art and cunning must make the necessary a possibility, can never be so strong, so unerringly certain, as one who, without having to drag a burden of responsibilities, acts according to a preconceived plan, and, whatever may happen, carries his will to the end. Hilde Wangel is stronger than Solness, whom even in Lysanger the dizzy conscience does not weaken; but only the master-builders construct houses for a God and homes for human beings. Bismarck himself only became as strong as the Princess Royal of Great Britain when the burden of his office had been lifted from him. It was only then that he could indulge in the luxury, heedless of sunshine, storm, and snow, like Alba's Philipp, "to will his will."

During the last days of his life he spoke very kindly of Frederick's widow. A clever woman, with whom he got on extremely well. The words she spoke to the suddenly dismissed Chancellor in March, 1890, when with his wife he took his leave from her—the rumour

that he had previously appealed to her for help, and in vain, is pure fiction—had not pointed their sting at him, but had, on the contrary, touched a chord in the breast of the embittered man, the sound of which he heard gladly. Since then the recollection of former conflicts seemed to be wiped out. And such conflicts had not by any means been wanting. Bismarck was animated by much mannish pride of sex. He did not grudge to women air and light, he saw them without desire, but with a hearty appreciation, and honoured even in the lowest peasant girl the man's tender helpmate. But, like Hagen of Tronje and Friedrich Hebbel, he did not care for the sight of a woman, who with a daring hand mingles in men's affairs. Like Hebbel, he also opined that if a flower bulb burst her glass she must die. And like to the man of Tronje, a Kriemhilde would have been to him an abomination. This fundamental view alone must have made the manners of the Crown Princess appear distasteful to him, who watched, not without anxiety, the growth of her Guelph-Koburg tendencies, and their effect on the reigning house. And she was an Englishwoman, would be nothing but an Englishwoman; and he needed for the building of his Empire hard, German stone, needed for his work strong national impulses, and regarded every attempt to link Germany to Great Britain as an ill-boding danger for Germany's future. Victoria knew this. Had Frederick ascended the throne as a hale and sound man, an open conflict could scarcely have been avoided. The wife of a dying Emperor, to whom a considerable portion of the people showed threatening countenances, had to be resigned. She could overthrow Puttkammer, whom the Chan-

cellor had already practically done with—the Anti-semites do not suspect to this day who was then the instigator,—and she could decorate Forckenbeck; but the decisive battle could not be fought in a sick-room. One thing only she ventured—and lost the game: the telegram which was to call the Prince of Bulgaria to Potsdam for a betrothal was not despatched, although Frederick had already sanctioned it, because the aide-de-camp general on duty at the last moment respectfully implored the Emperor to first submit the despatch to the Chancellor of the Empire. This remained the only attempt; had it succeeded, then the House of Hohenzollern had been pledged in Southern Europe against Russia; since it had miscarried, Victoria and Bismarck stood opposite each other like two opponents of equal prowess with bared swords, when one of them is bereft of a good weapon by a higher power. Such opponents respect each other, for one recognises the other's strength. . . . Bismarck spoke kindly and respectfully of Frederick's consort, who had never irritated him, like Augusta, with pin-pricks. And when he was asked why during the ninety-nine days he had not protected her against slander, he spoke to this effect: "The cause to a conscientious Minister stands higher than the highest personage. As a remedy against the slander, which annoyed me too, there were State attorneys; the strong, national reaction against foreign influence was no vexation to me, if only for its rarity, and because Providence — or whatever else you like to call the machinery—had not vouchsafed a longer reign to the Emperor. I was sorry for the poor woman. But a gentlewoman who dabbles in politics herself forfeits her gentlewoman's rights."

Was it not somewhat on these lines that Hagen spoke at the bier of Kriemhilde?

When Victoria was two years of age, the then Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs, whose name was Bülow, sent a message through von Bunsen to London, where excitement was running high over news of victories from Asia, to the following effect: "Allied with Great Britain by the ties of a long alliance and constant sincere friendship, we are accustomed to regard everything tending to augment the fame and the welfare of Great Britain in much the same light as if it had happened to ourselves." Even this almost servile tenderness remained at the time without a reply. When Victoria came nigh unto death, England was holding out on the Yang-tse, on the Vaal and at Lourenço-Marquez solely by German power; it was protected at the rottenest points of its world-empire only by the certain knowledge of her enemies, that at the critical moment Germany would not refuse her assistance; she was endangered in the very seat of her existence, if Germany had turned from her, and she therefore had to be grateful to every son, to every daughter whose prudent patriotism loosened the German sword in its scabbard on behalf of the British cause.

Victoria of England, the Empress Frederick, has not lived in vain. And since the black curtain has descended, the spectator breathes with relief and feels, reflecting on great things: here a determination, worthy of admiration, has sacrificed personal happiness to the victory of the cause, the service of which it entered since it grew up. Such feeling does not stem the

hot flood of tender tears. For the wife of the Emperor Frederick experienced the fate of Kriemhilde. Her whole life long she was, she seemed, cheated out of the fulfilment of her one desire, and when her life's wish, contrary to expectations, was granted at last, she had to die.

BISMARCK

Otto Eduard Leopold, Fürst von Bismarck, Herzog von Lauenburg (*born* April 1, 1815, at Schönhausen; *died* July 30, 1898, at Friedrichsruh), First Chancellor of the New German Empire. Married Johanne von Puttkammer on July 28, 1847. *Children:* Countess Marie (*born* August 21, 1848), married 1878, to Count Kuno Rantzau; Fürst Herbert (*born* December 28, 1849), married in 1892 Countess Margarete Hoyos; and Count Wilhelm (*born* August 1, 1852), married in 1885 his cousin, Sibylla von Arnim-Kröchlendorff.

BISMARCK

For the past nine months it had been a certainty. It could be read at every enquiry about the beloved Fürst in the anxious look of the doctor, whose watchful eye one dark October morning had diagnosed the first symptom of the new disease; and not for one second had he disguised from himself the dreadful certainty that the days of Otto Bismarck were numbered. At the root of the giant oak, the green crown of which no storm was able to break, there gnawed and bored busily a silent worm; and love had to relinquish the long-cherished hope that the giant would some day be torn down by a stroke in the fulness of his vitality, that a thunderbolt with tremendous vehemence would throw him, uprooted, to the ground. That is what we had hoped, what we had wished for him; and the thought of a slow dying away, a pitiful decaying of such powerful splendour, was almost more awful than the certainty of his near demise. Even to this thought we now had to get accustomed. Weeks, months might pass, until the silent spite of the invincible rodent had completed its work of destruction on the giant figure, had poisoned its last sap. Still erect in olden glory stood the trunk, which had

so often braved the thunder, and in storms so often, inwardly unmoved, gently shaken its high tops; and with astonishment the beholder saw the proud, youthful smile of Prometheus, which no lightning nor thunder could ever dispel. But few knew that the end was approaching, and the faithful doctor's friendly care was intent on keeping from the sufferer and those nearest to him the horrible truth, and on preventing a death with open doors—dying before the eyes of a lurking crowd, hungering for sensation, and following every phase of the death struggle with vulgar curiosity, eager to note every sinking of the vital strength. Many a bright day still dawned and filled even those who knew again with fresh hope. Whoever listened to the magnificent outbursts of political passion of the invalid fettered to his bath-chair, whoever heard, if only from afar, with what zest the sufferer followed the events of the day, how brilliant, especially of an evening, were his conversations, how intact the beautiful plasticity of his expositions, how the accuracy of his diplomatic insight and the unerring recognition of what was necessary at any given moment had remained with him, he could not, could not believe that so soon the black night would set in for ever. When this eye was aflame with the old fire, when this fine voice, halting from an overflow of ideas, spoke of the possible developments of German history, of the successes of the Russian policy, unsuspected until the unfortunate year 1890, and of the effects of the ugly Lippe affair, probably further reaching than to-day's shortsightedness dreams of, co-ordained the smallest events into their proper historic connection, and placed the least important everyday occurrence with slim finger into its proper perspective, then was

dispelled the conception that here was speaking one nigh unto death. One believes so readily what one would like to believe. And who would presume to say when this nature, stretched beyond the confines of human endurance, would be thoroughly exhausted, its last source of strength run dry? The God, who raised the genius on the sands of the March, could still perform a miracle on the old man. But again and again a lowly-uttered hint from the doctor extinguished all glimmering hope. The last week of suffering arrived, the signs of decay increased, and the onlookers, tremblingly watching the agony, hoped that the next hour must bring release. It was accepted as the anticipated miracle when he who had already been thought lost, was seated in the evening of the twenty-eighth day of July in his accustomed seat at the family table, drinking for the first time again with the enjoyment of a reconvalescent his favourite champagne, the brand with the white capsule, eating light dishes, and smoking five pipes. After hours of discourse in his old graceful manner, on Schweninger's advice that he should now go to bed again, he replied gaily, "What, already? But that is cruelty!" In the faces of his children he read the happiness of glad hope, which communicated itself to him all the more surely, since the doctor, who never left him in a critical hour, now, in order to deepen the psychical impression made by his clever art, left Friedrichsruh for a day and a half. The success of this evening was the last reward of an endeavour, extending over nearly two decades, and ready for any sacrifice, which no thanks, no official recognition could repay, which only devoted love can render. . . . I saw Schweninger as

he descended from the railway carriage in the afternoon of the thirtieth of July, as pale as death, in his hand the telegram which called him to the bedside of his prince. For nine days and nights he had not been able to undress, and overcome by fatigue he had missed the early train. Heedless of the pouring rain we raced to the station—in vain, even by a special train the goal of his longing could not be reached a second sooner. We sat in the empty waiting-room and talked of him. Perhaps the nervous solicitude of his surroundings had exaggerated the danger, perhaps it was only another attack of sick-bed weakness ; recovery might once more be possible. In the eye of the other the speaker read that he did not believe a word. The minutes crept by as though tired Chronos was about to become dilatory ; and at such a time, and in such a place. At last came the consummation. A shake of the hands—and both knew : it is over. . . . And yet, weeks and months of preparedness notwithstanding, when at night the mournful news came, the rousing call sounded shrill through the blustering storm, it seemed like an unexpected bolt from the blue, it seemed inconceivable, and yet was sorry certainty : to mankind, appreciative of all that is great, the Fürst was lost for ever.

" Consolation there is none," Schweninger had written. But the last hours of the night had to be got over. So I took up the greatest consoler, and wrote on the calendar leaf of the past day from Goethe's Epilogue to Schiller's " Lay of the Bell " the following lines :—

> " There tolls a midnight bell with mournful sound,
> Its message dread strikes on my startled ear ;
> Oh, can it mean our friend at last has found
> Untroubled sleep ? He, whom we held so dear.

Has Death claimed him with love and honour crowned,
And left us stunned to weep upon his bier?
Bewildered sink we 'neath the staggering blow,
The world e'en weeps, and feels but half our woe!"

And in memory of the friend whose arm the sufferer had held so often and long, and in whose arm he had now breathed his last:—

"You knew him well,—how with a giant's stride,
The Will to do became the accomplished Deed.
Though dark the book, with happy vision wide
The peoples' hearts and customs he would read.
But we who saw him sicken at our side,
And then from pain a few short moments freed,
We shared with him alternate hopes and fears,
For he was ours through all those sad, sweet years."

And, finally, the last consoling lines:—

"And forth from us, ten years now past, he wandered,
But yet in spirit close to us remained.
What blessings rich with lavish hand he squandered!
Ah! what we lost a wider world has gained,
And many souls upon his words have pondered
In that dim realm, where he alone has reigned.
He shone forth like a comet in the night,
Then linked his glory with Eternal Light."

The doctor, who could only ease the last moments of the beloved, was unjust in his first grief: there is a consolation. The Fürst—for us there was always only the one—had suffered much, but he had a good death—the death he himself would have wished. If the light of this soul, like a tired flame over an insufficiently fed wick, had gently flickered out, if this masterful heart had beaten with decreasing strength week by week, and to the horrified gaze had been offered the picture of a mentally-decaying Bismarck! . . . this was what his friends had dreaded; and this, the most dreadful, was spared them, was spared him

by the grace of fate. He had talked about it for years. He cared no more for life, he felt himself superfluous in his enforced inactivity, a prisoner, repudiated all contradiction, and used to say years ago that only regard for his wife, whom he should not like to predecease, chained him to this existence, which no longer was to him a pleasant habitude. When, in the autumn of 1894, the outwardly quiet, but in her heart of hearts most passionate housewife, who felt only with and for him, was also torn from his side, the sad moods, the sighs longing for death were more frequent; he demurred, sometimes softly, sometimes aloud, against the medical warning which was intended to preserve him, and grumbled that he had nothing more to look for or to find "here below." "I am old and used up: that is my disease, and there is but one remedy for it, which I am daily longing for." Every failure of his power of memory, which would not have been remarkable in even the youngest, actuated him to such remarks; and always there returned the fear lest he should become an object of misery. If on getting up from his armchair his legs failed him, or the tormenting facial pains forced him to pull a silken or woollen cap right over his massive skull down to the white, bushy eyebrows, close on the maidenlike tender skin of the exquisitely chiselled waxen ears, he would remark with a smile, "Yes, on the roof an old man sits, how to move is past his wits." And his hearers could protest as much as they liked, could affirm from honest conviction that in his personality not a trace of the aged man was noticeable: it was of no avail. He suffered from life, suffered unspeakably, in the consciousness that his bodily strength had slipped away from his restless working mind, and that the means for giving

expression to his stormy temperament had begun to fade. How would he, who so narrowly observed and controlled himself, have suffered, had he grown mentally helpless, and been condemned to trace the dying off of the senses. Is it not a consolation that up to the last hours of life he saw and heard plainly, that he preserved the full power of his incomparable intuition, and felt in unperturbed clearness of mind the gradual approach of the deliverer he had so often invoked? . . . And it is a further consolation that on parting he saw only the most faithful about him, only good faces, only genuine tears. No crocodile's tears, no plaint of an uneasy conscience, no comedian's grimace desecrated, so long as he breathed, the death-chamber of the man to whom nothing was more loathsome than the whitewash of sycophancy, and who barred nothing more decidedly than the empty pathos of noisy prologues and necrologies. The living had not always been able to escape such homage; from the dying it was kept away. And it was precisely those who mourned him best, who breathed with relief when, without festival comedy, the coffin was closed and sealed. Now the inevitable might come to pass, now might all who had injured, reviled, and wounded him strike up their choral songs of grief and their patriotic hymns; he saw them, they saw him no more. Plainly the plain man rested on his last pillows; and plain will be the ceremony when the body is interred in the beloved soil of the Sachsenwald.

It was in the year 1894, after the day in January which had seen Bismarck at the castle in Berlin, and, as the credulous maintained for a long time, had brought about the conclusion of a "reconciliation."

The Fürst at that time was still allowed, even in cool weather, to carry on conversations in the open, and would invite guests whose ways were not objectionable to him into the carriage, in which Patzke, the reliable coachman—at home in forest and field—drove him out daily for a few hours before the principal meal. All kind of tattle, all sorts of attempts to distort the relations between the now pardoned man and the Court and Government, had at first annoyed him, and subsequently moved him to ironic merriment. On the way home he grew silent, and ordered the carriage to be stopped close to the manor-house. He pointed with the crutch of his walking-stick to a hill opposite the house, which foolishly had been called a castle, and said: "There, I think, I shall some day be buried with my wife. I had thought also of Schönhausen; but here it seems more suitable, since at Schönhausen I have really long since been a stranger." The guest had to remain silent. At night, when the old-fashioned oil-lamp was burning snugly and the ailing Fürstin had dozed off on her sofa, beneath Lenbach's masterpiece of the old Emperor, the thinker reopened the theme, enlarged on it after his own fashion, and seemed delighted at his humorous description of the ceremonial noise that would be made after his death. Frau Johanna awoke with a start and called out, quite annoyed, "But, little Otto, how can you talk of such mournful things!" "Dear child," was the reply, "death must come in spite of Schweninger, and I will at least take timely precautions that no mischief is done to my body. I should not like to be what the Berlin folk call a handsome corpse; and a tragi-comedy staged by that well-known sincerity which privately says 'Ough!'

—something between a Vogelwiese Fair and a procession—were about the only thing that could still appal me." The friends of the family know how often the great man has later given words to these thoughts, and illumined them with that graceful humour peculiar to himself.

He still stood erect when for the first time I attempted to limn the contour of his life. This is what I then wrote :—

Four weeks after Napoleon's return from Elba, the retired Captain Ferdinand von Bismarck is presented by his clever and beautiful wife — *née* Wilhelmine Luise Mencken, of plain bourgeois parentage—with a healthy boy at Schönhausen on the Elbe. The little Otto learns what a young squire used to learn in those days; and as an early inclination soon drove him to the study of geography, at an early period the first amazement develops in the childish brain: thirty-nine different frontiers are shown on the map of Germany, which with ardent boyish zest he studies and studies again. The bright colours become dulled when the seventeen-year-old is sent from the Graue Kloster in Berlin to Göttingen, from the confinement of the school to the unbounded freedom of the *Universitas literarum*, from the narrow high school discipline, after the old Berlin style, to the light and airy world of bright rapiers and coloured caps. Young Squire Otto develops into a merry lad: he smokes, he fights, he drinks, he is noisy, but he does not altogether neglect his work over it. History now attracts him, the wonderful vista of which is opened up to him by old Heeren; and under Hugo,

and later in Berlin under Savigny, he learns how law came into the world, and how in the course of time it had to undergo changes. Since he never looked upon himself as merely a fellow of one of the University corps, he does not afterwards, on joining the Government service, become a mere shallow philistine. He works in Berlin, Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle), Potsdam. But not for long does he feel at home in the close atmosphere of the office; and soon he discovers that he is not cut out for a bureaucrat, who has to lay aside his individuality and himself, a cypher, has to deal according to schedule with the numbered documents, and so he returns to the paternal acres. The epoch commences which with gentle sarcasm he once referred to as the period of his agrarian ignorance, which, however, in all probability laid the firm foundation to his view of the world—a natural one, in the meaning of Goethe; amidst Pommerian monotony the wild young squire from the Kniephof discovered the intimate relationship to a wisely governing Providence, and the sure feeling for the requirements of human beings, moving amongst the simplest conditions of life. A capital host, a faithful manager, and, with all his wild merriment, an earnest nature earnestly seeking sincerity: thus he appears, more especially in the letters to his sister Malwine, to our gaze. This nature remained quiet and dumb so long as it could freely live its own life in its self-created sphere of duty; it was bound to break out volcanically at the moment, when a strange and inimical view of the world obtruded itself within sight. Without the stiffening of the liberal ideal Bismarck might have become but one of the many representatives of an old and established

landed proprietorship in the Prussian Upper Chamber, although he, as Sybel (unfortunately only late) has recognised, is the born statesman and politician; he always needed friction, some impetus from outside, to feel quite up to the mark, to be quite himself, with the flickering sparks of a genial personality. Not until the revolutionary storm burst was the country squire stirred from his oblivion, not until roused by the instinctive feeling that there might be danger threatening to the organic growth and development of his beloved Prussia, was he driven into public life. Without a great object, he certainly never would have stirred; now the great object seemed given him, and the problem offered — to protect Prussia from far-fetched recipes of education that had not been proved in the March, — and now there was no longer any holding him. The dreamy spirit of Frederick William IV., groping restlessly for support, scents in the man, who is so fundamentally different from Gerlach, Manteuffel, Brandenburg, Radowitz, and company, the possible saviour; he regards him, as Bismarck afterwards was fond of saying, as an egg from which, by the warmth of the Royal will, a Minister might be hatched. But the time is not ripe yet. The absolutely unambitious man of the March escapes unscathed to Frankfurt, to Petersburg, and Paris; he exercises, like the young General Bonaparte, without allowing the intent to be perceived, the deciding influence on the resolutions of the superiors; but he remains behind, and only advances into the glaring footlight when the military drama in Prussia is nearing a dangerous conclusion and gives rise to the fear that the conflict of Powers might threaten the roots of

the monarchy. Here steps in the autodidact, reared almost a savage, with the very definite programme: unconcerned with other considerations to advance the special purpose of the Prussian State and to eradicate pitilessly any growth that might prove detrimental to such particular purpose, and guided by the very definite sentiment that political art in the main is nothing but a properly utilised knowledge of history, and that the great politician is made by the capacity, clearly to realise at any moment the limits of what is attainable. He wins the risky game. And as he sees the limits of the attainable pushed back further, the first amazement of the boy bending over the map returns, the child's dream of a German Unity comes back to him, and the rank Prussian young squire from the United Diet becomes the exponent of the Liberal youths' enthusiasm. The disciple of Heeren creates in practice a new geography of Europe, the student under Savigny is preparing a fresh soil for a new legal history. The strong man, who had for so long been swimming against the stream, is caught and carried by the tide, and around the formerly much-abused, now arise the acclamations of many hundred thousand voices. Thus it has remained to this day, in spite of disgrace, outlawry, and "reconciliation," *avant et après la bouteille.* If one looks back on the events of the last lustre, on the almost unbroken line of almost too noisy ovations, one has to remember, in order to find an example in German history, of Master Martin, of whom Wilhelm Scherer could say: "So long as Luther lived, he was the centre of Germany, and here congregated the scholars from all parts where German was spoken, and filled

the world with the spirit of the Reformation." But Luther's task was not completed; he was still a fighter, and the champion of a new truth is always an attraction to youth. The national policy of Bismarck is completed. During the past quarter of a century he has always counselled quietude to his people; during the past five years, in nearly all emergencies, his axiom has been *Quieta non movere;* he himself, in accord with Goethe's ripe advice, has remained stationary at a certain time of life on a definite point of view, and cautiously fends off all new wishes and demands; reformatory pronouncements by him will not be heard by pilgrims to Friedrichsruh; and the man with the grey mantle, who wears the shining cuirass and the golden sword of the Emperor, can no longer be mistaken, even by the malicious, for a fierce man of the *fronde.* And yet he compels not merely, like Luther, the frothy youth. He holds them all, young and old, men and women, friends and foes; none may pass by the powerless octogenarian without paying him tribute either in love or in hatred. By what means has he worked this the greatest of all the marvels he has accomplished? How does it happen that a world replete with new ideas and new longings seems to come to a standstill for a while, to listen to the word of one nurtured in the Napoleonic era, whose achievements belong to the past, and whose speech is so frequently in direct opposition to the demands of this changed world? . . . When I look back, how I myself learnt to love him—at first from afar and later near to,—the answer does not seem to me so very difficult. He is simple—and the little beings of to-day are nearly all most horribly complicated; he is grown organ-

ically from a sound root in a straight line — and to-day dominates the whimpering of those artificially propped up and of degenerates; he never gives out anything that he has not previously really possessed, —no idea that he has not thought out to the end, no word that he has not felt or deemed necessary to the feeling of the listeners,—and to-day the far-too-many pay in greasy base coin and well-thumbed notes from all countries; he is strong, and yet delicate,—and all around the gaze encounters nought but flash brutality or simpering neurasthenics. And because he is so simple, organically erect, mentally always solvent as a true prince from the realms of the genii; because he never loses the firm ground from under his feet; and because, from the curious mixture of a hot temperament and an almost too delicately sensitive soul no uncannily broiling bubbles ever arise, thus he produces in a time of ferment a feeling of cosy sincerity, thus he is a factor of clearly defined worth, and thus many an one who publicly quarrels with him, yet wishes him on the quiet a long life. His very existence acts reassuringly, as the courage of the crew and passengers' confidence is strengthened by the certain knowledge that the old captain is in his cabin, who knows all about wind and weather, and from whom no deviations from the course, no perilously rash impulses need be feared. Is it necessary to recall expressly that the reputation of such a captain and the confidence in his unfailing wisdom reach their highest points at a time when he could leave the making of mistakes to others, and long since needed to furnish no further proofs of his own capabilities? Otto Bismarck was far too sober a calculator not to be

fully aware of the fact that the pure polyphony of the birthday choruses — though scarcely seriously dimmed by the decision of a majority in the Reichstag, indiscreet but honourable to him — only became possible since it was voiced to one out of office, on whom hope has every claim and fear none at all. He had always possessed the gift to be fortunate—always belonged to the favoured children of Providence, with whom all things turn out well. He never had to court love in vain, no child of his ever died or went to the bad; and when the kind-hearted woman—noble to the core in spite of the roughness of her manners, with whom the difficult connubial experiment had brilliantly succeeded—finally, after a long illness, went to her last rest, there was no pitiful dying, no sudden rupture of a painfully gripped chord, but a quiet death slowly slouching along on silent soles, the approach of which the patient, peacefully abed in joyful hope, never suspected. To fortune's favourite, in whom a high mental longing but rarely allowed a feeling of cosy happiness to pervade, even the dismissal turned out to be for the best. The national politician was hard hit, but to the man it was of advantage: he saw much in another light when he stepped from the stage into a box; and he himself was viewed differently since the circle of his intercourse expanded and men like Boetticher, Rottenburg, Holstein and company no longer blocked his way. Napoleon experienced the change in a different sequence; but as the First Consul in Malmaison, accessible to every compatriot, is humanly much nearer to us than the adipose Emperor in his palace of pomp, so to coming generations the country squire of Friedrichsruh and

Varzin will displace the "Iron" Chancellor of the Wilhelmstrasse. Our democratic period is not keen on great men—it just tolerates them,—but is constantly sniffing for puny indications of humanity, and is delighted if in the uncomfortably great it can discover something of a vulgar kind. Thus the insatiable greed for backstair indiscretions, thus the softening and belittling of the towering giant figure of Bismarck, the pathetic tears that ever again are distilled out of an old weakness of his eyes; hence the swift and gigantic success of the charming philistine pictures of the merry draughtsman Allers, hence the tendency to falsify the grim old ogre of old into the wolf of the fairy tale, comfortably licking his chops.

Wherever I could I enquired whether Bismarck changed in private life. Kurd von Schloezer, who could sing his praises for hours on end, said to me again and again: "No, he is to-day precisely as I knew him in St Petersburg, in intercourse with Emperors and Kings exactly the same man, as in conversation with some tourist, whose name and rank he does not know." This verdict has been often confirmed by Ernst Schweninger, who surely loved him best; and Franz von Lenbach would then add with a sparkling eye: "He! He surely lives in a totally different world, nothing distracts him, and we all of us merely crawl through his visions." I believe they are right; only in bad stage-plays have I, incredulous, experienced it, that with the change of scenery also the characters changed; the writer of the letters to the Arnims, to Polte Gerlach and John Lothrop Motley, the neighbour at the dinner-table of the beautiful Eugenie, the conjurer of the Wilhelmstrasse, the

exiled, and the apparently freed from the winter of ungracious displeasure: all of these seem to me one personality, an individuality strong in its unity, which ripened by experience, but the stamp of which remained always unchanged.

You must have grown up in Berlin, in the acid, sharp atmosphere of the belated forty-eights, to be able fully to comprehend how we youngsters, long even after the great war, pictured Bismarck to ourselves approximately. A werwolf, by comparison, is a dainty, loveable creature. All misfortune, so we were told day by day, and so it was printed in the newspaper which precocious curiosity pried into, can really be traced to Bismarck, whose whole life's work is founded on base outrage, on frivolous infringement of the law and shameless perjury, who oppresses and grinds the poor people, who plans one hundred-million project after the other out of fresh taxation, only for his private amusement, and to feed the terrible moloch of militarism. Even by the most friendly critics he was depicted somewhat resembling his portrait in Zola's bourse epos: "Un colosse, vêtu d'un uniforme blanc, éclatant et superbe, riant d'un rire large, les yeux gros, le nez fort, avec une mâchoire puissante que barraient des moustaches de conquérant barbare." Even the comparison to a faithful bulldog, made by Zola in another chapter, was then already in vogue; only the epic poets of Berlin used to emphasise its biting propensities more emphatically than the fidelity of the animal. Not a vestige of careful psychological research; conclusions were drawn after the evil *a priori* method. Thus he is, and thus he therefore had to act, from such and such motives; instead of enquiring: "How is he, who acted thus?" and to explain

him and judge him from his actions and omissions. Gradually, indeed, one saw it, as one grew older; but the heart of the personality remained distant and a mystery. The man was too broad, too big, and as those in his immediate vicinity only gazed up at him, while grovelling on their bellies, even from those admitted to his intimacy nothing reliable could be gleaned. He had found countless detractors, and many a Béranger, but no Täine as yet, who explained the giant to us clinically.

As though it had been yesterday, so well do I remember how I felt, when for the first time I journeyed to Friedrichsruh. The embarrassment was natural; but there also made itself felt an alarmed quaking at the possible loss of an illusion; there are so many famous men, who on closer acquaintance prove disappointing. And now, to my dismay, I was conducted from the train straight into the dining-room—there arose heavily a mighty figure in the bright snow-light, and a high and courteous voice bade me a kindly greeting. Everything in the man is beautiful: the powerful eye, the almost girlish delicacy of the skin, the slender and fresh hand, which does not seem to belong to an old man, but to some well-groomed diplomat of about fifty. He gives you the impression in his long black coat, with the grandfather's neckcloth, of a relic of the days of Goethe, who, serenely peaceful, gazes on the confused bustle around him. In uniform he appears more massive, more mythical, one might say; but from his refined particularity it seems to detract something. He is no cavalrist like other cavalrists; indeed, cuirass and sword of honour notwithstanding, he is really not a soldier at all; he himself told on one occasion that he

could never manage, even at important functions, to get himself adjusted according to regulations, and when the War Lord received his Colonel-General at the castle, the latter noticed, far too late, that he had forgotten his epaulets. The artistic and profoundly poetic element in Bismarck's nature, which Lenbach's restless zeal has so masterly felt, has probably been hidden from the gaze of the onlooker by the uniform. To me, immediately on my first encounter, it appeared plastic, and I comprehended at once why this appearance had frequently so foolishly been misjudged. The synthesis was wanting, the appreciation of the essence of genius which is always unsophisticated and never evolves its plans from complicated calculation. Bismarck has been made out a fabulous being of gigantic intelligence, with almost Zarathustrian want of morals, a man who knows everything and cunningly weighs everything, but who is never scrupulous in the choice of means. This is the picture of genius seen through the spectacles of mediocrity, a mediocrity devoid of temperament, short-sighted, speculative; thus also does the cultured person, whose brain-power has been developed in one direction only, regard genius: thus Börne, in days gone by, saw Goethe. A particle of the artist, be it ever so small, must be alive in everyone who wishes to estimate human greatness. If Bismarck, with his hits and misses, is not held to be a personality, unsophisticatedly creating and evolving from instinct, then the most grotesque misconceptions will arise. Sybel has likened him to Themistocles, in whom Thucydides praises the faculty of being able to find the momentarily requisite, immediately after brief reflection, by sheer force of his nature. Better still, perhaps, is the comparison to a hunter, with whom

the scent takes the place of reflection and meditation. During his long life he has taken aim at all kinds of hares and deer and boar, and even at fiercer game; he always awaited the scent, and if it struck his nostrils unpleasantly, there was for him no close time and no consideration for still protected game, then the guns went off, and sometimes only on inspecting the day's bag the hunter would discover what he had actually shot. Afterwards came the wiseacres and invented *ex post* a circumstantial deep-laid plan, the details of which the vigorous hunter himself must have often listened to in merry amazement.

Otto Bismarck can stand, as he really is, without any retouching, in the sterling nobility of his nature. Only fools and lackeys can deny that he frequently failed like any ordinary mortal, and that he carries in his blood an ample patrimony of old-Prussian limited prejudices. But the highest boon granted to mortals he has attained and proved: the personality. He thinks, he speaks, he writes like no other. Never have I heard him utter a trivial platitude, whether he was talking of politics or domestic questions, of agrarian troubles or events in the world's history. He has learnt much, read voluminously, and experienced more; to no subject is he a stranger, and a wonderfully retentive memory enables him to allow any chord that may have been struck ever so lightly to continue to vibrate. And throughout all his learning, reading, and experiences, he yet never lost that originality of feeling which helped him past all difficulties; when in the autumn of 1894 he experienced the heaviest loss, he sat down beside the narrow bed of his Johanna and wept like a child; he was in his dressing-gown, without stockings, and sat there and wept silently by

himself. . . . Where is the hero of eighty years of age who would dare to let himself be seen thus? Truly, Goethe is right when he lets Ottilie reflect in her diary that the hero could only be really recognised by the hero, while the valet only knew how to appreciate his own kind. But here is the hero, whom even the valets admire, the great man, whom even the huddled masses of the small ones regard with proud imagination. Something compelling there is in this strongest of charmers, a compact unity from which even the dullest mind cannot escape, and a childlike nobility, to which everything is becoming. One needs no cumbersome mental crutches, needs not the reminder that one is seated by the side of the creator and destroyer of empires, artificially to induce the auto-suggestion, to admire the man and to cordially love him, who was born in 1815, and whose nature, even in 1895, does not emit the sound of a false note. He is beloved by the best, and deserves their love, because, in an epoch of self-admiring half-hearted sympathy with the infinitesimally small, it affords solace and proud joy to observe, how by the actions of a mighty being the boundaries of humanity can be enlarged.

Now the lofty picture is taken from us.

Old Mr Moritz Busch, Bismarck's "Büschchen," published on the morning after the death of the Fürst in the "Berliner Lokalanzeiger" the petition for dismissal which the first Chancellor of the German Empire sent to the palace on the 19th of March 1890, in answer to the Emperor's command, transmitted to him twice in one day. Since the Crown Council of the 24th of January, at the close of which the Emperor was secretly informed that the Chancellor had previously

"got at" the Prussian Ministers, and worse still, since the morning of the 16th of March, when, as the Emperor censured the private interview of the Fürst with Windthorst, and very definitely deprecated the continuance of such intercourse with deputies uncontrolled by him, the following words were spoken: "The power of my Master ends at the drawing-room of my wife,"—since these events the relations between Emperor and Chancellor had become untenable. Other differences — over the value of the Cabinet order of the 8th of September 1852, by which a sphere of influence commensurate with his responsibility was secured to the President of the Prussian Ministry of State, over the utility of a speedy return of the Tsar's visit, a second journey to Rome, the treatment of Social Democracy and the attitude towards Russia— had previously already cropped up; Fürst Bismarck was under the impression that "his services no longer were required," and only his conscientiousness, only the feeling that in the hour of serious danger and hopeless confusion he must not, like a sensitive weakling, desert the flag, kept him in office. On New Year's day William the Second had written to him that he hoped long to preserve for himself the "faithful and proved counsel" of the Chancellor. This mood seemed now to have disappeared; the Chancellor could complain of "hurtful, unmerited distrust," the Ministry of State seemed to be crumbling away, even in the transaction of Imperial business the formerly all-powerful encountered unobtrusive, but invincible resistance: he was bound to notice that for him the days of happy, untrammelled work were over. "As a relief," says Professor Horst Kohl in the appendix to his complete edition of Bismarck's speeches, "he

welcomed the request to resign which reached him on the morning of the 17th of March in official form and without any clause. In the afternoon of the same day he assembled around him the Ministers for a last conference, in which he informed them of the events of the last days. The Emperor, who was immediately informed by one of the Ministers as to what had transpired in the Ministerial Council, seized the opportunity, on the evening of the 17th of March, to demand anew in an official *excitatorium* the tendering of the petition for resignation.

Here is Bismarck's petition :—

"BERLIN, 18*th March* 1890.

"On the occasion of my reverential report of the fifteenth of this month, your Majesty commanded me to submit the draft of an order, by which the Imperial order of September 8, 1852, which hitherto regulated the position of a Ministerial president *vis-à-vis* his colleagues, should be rescinded. I venture to submit the following most submissive exposition of the genesis and significance of this order.

"For the post of a 'President of the Ministry of State,' at the time of an absolute monarchy, there was no need, and it was first pointed out at the United Diet of 1847 by the then Liberal deputies (Hevissen) as a necessity to inaugurate a constitutional state of affairs by the appointment of a 'Prime Minister,' whose task it would be to secure the political unity of the responsible entire ministry. In 1848 this custom came into being, and as 'Presidents of the Ministry of State' there were nominated Count Arnim, Camphausen, Count Brandenburg, Baron von Manteuffel, the Prince of Hohenzollern, not for one department,

but for the joint policy of the Cabinet: in other words, for the sum of the departments. Most of these gentlemen had no department of their own, but merely a presidentship, such as, shortly before my joining, the Prince of Hohenzollern, the Minister von Auerswald, the Fürst Hohenlohe. But it was his duty to maintain within the Ministry of State and its relations to the monarch that unity and steadiness, without which any ministerial responsibility, as demanded by the nature of constitutional life, is not sustainable. The relationship between the Ministry of State with its individual members and the newly-instituted Ministerial Presidentship soon needed more definite regulations in keeping with the constitution, such as were issued in accord with the then existing Ministry of State by the order of September 8, 1852. This order has since remained decisive for the position of the President towards the Ministry, and it alone gave the President that authority which enabled him to undertake that measure of responsibility for the aggregate policy of the Cabinet, with which he is credited by the Diet and by public opinion. If every individual Minister can extract Imperial commands without a previous understanding with his colleagues, an uniform policy, for which some one can be held responsible, is impossible. No Minister, and more especially not the President, will be able to carry the constitutional responsibility for the aggregate policy of the Cabinet. In an absolute monarchy a regulation, as contained in the order of 1852, is unnecessary, and would still be so to-day if we returned to absolutism without ministerial responsibility. According to the constitutional arrangements at law, a presidential guidance of the assembly of ministers on the basis of the order of 1852 is indispens-

able. On this point, as was decided at yesterday's ministerial meeting, all my colleagues agree with me, and also on the fact that every one of my successors in the presidency would not bear the responsibility, if the authority granted by the order of 1852 were lacking. With each one of my successors this necessity will be more apparent than in my case, for he will not at once have the authority to back him up, which hitherto has been vouchsafed me by reason of a presidentship of many years' standing and the confidence of the two late Emperors. I have so far never had occasion to refer expressly to the order of 1852 in dealing with my colleagues. Its existence, and the certainty that I possessed the confidence of the two deceased Emperors, William and Frederick, sufficed to safeguard my authority within the Assembly. This certainty, however, does not exist either for my colleagues or for myself. I, therefore, had to fall back upon the order of the year 1852 to secure the necessary unity in the service of your Majesty.

"From the foregoing reasons I am unable to carry out your Majesty's command, in accordance with which I myself am to rescind and countermand the order of 1852, only recently recalled to memory by myself, and at the same time am to carry on the Presidentship of the Ministry of State.

"According to the communications which General von Hahnke and Privy Cabinet Councillor Lucanus made to me yesterday, I cannot doubt that your Majesty knows and believes that it is impossible for me to rescind the order and yet remain Minister. Nevertheless your Majesty has upheld the command transmitted to me on the fifteenth, and foreshadowed the acceptance of my petition of resignation thus rendered necessary.

After former conversations, which I had with your Majesty on the question whether my remaining in office would be undesirable to your Majesty, I felt justified in the assumption, that it would be agreeable to your Majesty if I resigned my position in your Majesty's Prussian service, but retained office in the Empire. I took the liberty on closer examination of the question respectfully to draw attention to some risky consequences of this partition of my offices, particularly in view of the Chancellor's firm attitude in the Reichstag, and refrain from repeating here all the consequences that such a severance between Prussia and the Imperial Chancellor would carry in its train. Your Majesty then was pleased to agree that everything should for the time being remain as it was. But as I have had the honour to explain, it is impossible for me to retain the position of a Ministerial President, since in its case your Majesty has repeatedly ordered the *capitis diminutio*, which would be the means of rescinding the order of 1852. Your Majesty furthermore was pleased, on the occasion of my respectful report of the fifteenth of this month, to draw boundaries to the extension of my official rights, which do not permit me sufficient scope for participation in the affairs of the State, for supervision of the latter or for free movement in my ministerial resolutions, and in my intercourse with the Reichstag and its members, which I need for taking over the constitutional responsibility of my official activity. But even were it possible to carry out our foreign policy independently from the internal policy, and the foreign Imperial policy as independently from the Prussian, as would be the case if the Imperial Chancellor stood equally unconcernedly aloof from Prussian politics, as he

does from Bavarian or Saxon, and had no part in the completion of the Prussian vote in the Federal Council *vis-à-vis* the Reichstag, I should still, in view of the latest decisions of your Majesty regarding the tendency of our foreign policy, as summarised in your Majesty's autograph letter, which accompanied yesterday the reports of the Consul in Kieff, find it impossible to undertake the carrying out of the prescribed details with regard to the foreign policy. I should by such a step jeopardise all the successes of importance to the German Empire which our foreign policy, carried out during decades in the spirit of the two predecessors of your Majesty, has achieved, in our relations to Russia in unfavourable circumstances, and the unexpectedly great significance of which was confirmed to me by . . . on his return from Petersburg.

"It is very painful to me, with my attachment to the service of the Royal House and to your Majesty, and after having lived for many years in circumstances which I had hitherto considered permanent, to separate myself from the accustomed relations with your Majesty and the entire policy of the Empire and Prussia; but on mature consideration of your Majesty's intentions, to carry out which I should have to be prepared if I remained in office, I cannot do otherwise than humbly beg of your Majesty to graciously relieve me, and with the legal pensions, of my offices as Imperial Chancellor, Ministerial President, and Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs. From my impressions of the last few weeks and from the disclosures which I gathered yesterday from the communications of your Majesty's Civil and Military Cabinet, I may respectfully assume that with this

petition for dismissal I am meeting your Majesty's wishes, and that I may count with certainty on a gracious assent. I should have submitted the prayer for my discharge from my offices a long time ago, had I not had the impression that your Majesty wished to make use of the experiences and capabilities of a faithful servant of your ancestors. Since I am convinced that your Majesty does not need them, I can retire from political life without fear that public opinion will condemn my decision as untimely.

"VON BISMARCK."

Fürst Bismarck must have been astounded when, thirty-six hours later, he received the following holograph letter from the Emperor:—

"MY DEAR FÜRST,

"With deep emotion I have gathered from your petition of the eighteenth of this month that you are determined to retire from the offices which for many years you have filled with incomparable success. I had hoped that I need not have accustomed myself, during our lifetimes, to the idea of a separation from you; if, nevertheless, fully conscious of the consequences and import of your resignation, I am now obliged to become accustomed to that thought, I do it with a heavy heart indeed, but firmly confident that the granting of your prayer will contribute towards sparing and preserving as long as possible your life and strength, so irreparable to the Fatherland. The reasons adduced by you for your decision convince me of the hopelessness of success of any attempts to induce you to withdraw your application. I therefore accede to your wish, whilst granting the

prayed-for retirement from your offices as Imperial Chancellor, President of my Ministry of State, and Minister of Foreign Affairs graciously, and confident that, also in the future, your counsel and your energy, your fidelity and your devotion to me and the Fatherland will never be wanting. I have always regarded it as one of the happiest dispensations in my life, that, on ascending the throne, I had you by my side as my earliest counsellor. What you have striven and accomplished for Prussia and Germany, what you have been to my house, my ancestors, and to me, will always remain a grateful, imperishable memory to me and to the German people. Also abroad your wise and effective policy of peace, which from a full conviction I am also determined to take for my guidance for the future, will be remembered in grateful recognition. Adequately to reward your services is beyond my power. I must content myself with assuring you of the undying gratitude of myself and the Fatherland. In token of such gratitude, I confer upon you the dignity of a Duke of Lauenburg. I will also forward to you a life-size portrait of myself. God bless you, my dear Fürst, and grant you many years of undisturbed age, hallowed by the consciousness of duty loyally done. With these sentiments I remain, also in the future, your faithfully attached, grateful Emperor and King,

"WILHELM, I.R.

"BERLIN, 20*th March* 1890."

Two days later the Emperor telegraphed to Weimar: "I am so sore at heart as though I had again lost my grandfather! But it is thus ordained for me by God; so I have to bear it, even though I

should sink under the load. The duties of the officer of the watch on the ship of State have fallen to me. The course remains the same, and now: 'Full steam ahead!'"

The reply to the application for discharge was bound to surprise the recipient, since it, as well as the Weimar telegram, seemed to imply that the Emperor had undergone a severe mental struggle ere he could summon up courage to agree with his Chancellor's resolve, and because it mentioned the "hopelessness of further attempts to induce Bismarck to withdraw his petition." No attempt in this direction had ever been made, not even the least, most indirect; it had even taken two Imperial *excitatoria* to urge Bismarck to the step which was to decide the immediate future of German history, and the expression of regret, indicated by the words "further attempts have up to now," remained incomprehensible. If only for that reason, it is well that the text of the letter of the eighteenth of March should have become universally known. Perhaps now the nation, which so far knew nothing authentic of these matters, will be enlightened unequivocably, whether at that time there were perhaps intrigues abroad among the high circles, that tried to sow discord between the young master and the old servant, and whether the Emperor, to whom Bismarck was depicted as a bodily and mentally decayed morphinist, had not after all received false news about the intentions of the Chancellor, and about futile overtures that were supposed to have been made. Bismarck had earnestly desired the publication of his petition for discharge,—he called it "one in inverted commas,"—he regretted that it was impossible, in view of the State interests touched upon, for himself to

publish the letter during his lifetime, but he had hoped that it would certainly after his death see the light of day. Mr Busch has been reproached for having acted with indecent haste ; it would have been more proper, said the censorious, to have waited at least until the body of the great one had found its last resting-place. Bismarck would merely have smiled compassionately at such sentimentalities. If a cognisance of the document is of any importance in judging a still dark chapter of our history, then it must not be withheld prudishly. A nation that wants to see such a hero painted and officially embalmed before according him a place in the Pantheon is surely not worthy of the hero. . . . Bismarck wished to regard his political life's work as ended with the death of the old Emperor, and not to be made responsible for the subsequent developments ; therefore he desired that on his grave-stone should be cut the plain, almost too humble, inscription : "Fürst Bismarck, a faithful German servant of the Emperor William the First." This term of service was probably in the mind of Busch when he placed at the head of his serviceable revelations the motto from the book 'Jesus Sirach' : "It rests within the hands of God that a King may flourish ; He gives him a commendable Chancellor. The master must serve a wise servant, and a sensible master does not grumble at it." The German nation has now learnt the reason which drove the Chancellor from the service of the Third Emperor and forced him, inactive, to sigh away eight years ; it awaits the completion, which only the crowned confidential man of the nation can grant or deny. Will he grant it ?

Goethe makes Pallas Athene, disguised in the mortal exterior of Nestor's son, Antilochos, speak thus

to Achilles, who preferred a short, glorious life to a long, tiring career :—

"If my father should die, the grey and valiant Nestor,
Who'll bewail him forsooth? And e'en from the eye of his offspring
Runs scarce a piteous tear to the ground. And entirely ended
Lies now at rest the old man, the mortals' glorious pattern.
But the young boy, should he fall, excites an infinite longing
Down in the breast of all men, and to each one anew does he perish,
Wishing to crown glorious deed with a chaplet of rare deeds of glory."

"Entirely ended," like Nestor, so Bismarck died. Nevertheless he arouses, while falling, unending yearning, and there follows the man of eighty-three to his family vault the sigh which escaped from the lips of Goethe's goddess on the death of Achilles, "Oh, that so early the beautiful image should be gone from the world, that far and wide enjoys but the common!" Is it not strange, is it not a spectacle never beheld before, that an old man, arrived at the border-line of existence, who for almost a decade has already been powerless, should be mourned by the people of Germania as though there had died a youth, gazing heroically upon life, whose curly head Hope fancies to be allowed to adorn with the Saviour's radiant crown? The curious riddle is not solved by telling those who wonder that the mourning is not for the man, but for the period, as the last, greatest representative of which he went to his grave; the era of heroes in German history has disappeared since the month of March 1888, deposited in an urn since the March of 1890; the swarm of the always happy meanwhile feels very well at the decked festive boards of the new era, and whoever dares to recall past glories is rudely relegated into the corner as a spoil-sport, while far and wide vulgarities are noisily

being enjoyed. No ; the death-wail of the living race, which to new shores is tempted by a new craft, is not meant for the vanished times, is also not meant for the politician or the founder of an Empire, whose day's work, in the opinion of the majority, was done, and who in vital questions so frequently enforced definite, occasionally even rebellious, contradiction. The loss of a man who cannot be replaced is bewailed by humanity, of one, whom even the bitterest enemy in the fierce battle of opinions did not want to miss, and infinite yearning is awakened by the certainty, that from the passionate human desire to love reverently, the great object had been taken for long, perhaps for ever. No greater foolishness could be imagined than that of the good folk who compare Fürst Bismarck with other statesmen, and actually imagine that they are honouring him, as did after his death the speckled Mr Crispi, by placing him side by side with Gladstone. The question is futile, whether there ever were, ever will be, ever can be stronger politicians, better attuned in the unity of their views of the world to the demands of the times, more gifted with a keener insight into approaching necessities: what lifts the strong man, who changed German history, above the ranks of political masters, is that he was more than a politician. Gladstone, too, aimed higher; he sweated, a polyhistorian and dilettante, in all apparently difficult sciences, over books and papers, and yet never got beyond pitiable spade-work. Bismarck was no bookworm; according to modern ideas he had not read a great deal, but the little he had read well, and what he had once assimilated was never overburdened with philistine culture; probably the greater part of what natural sciences

and economics had achieved in the later decades was foreign to the ageing man, and he always liked to speak of the conquests of science with the disdain of the son of the soil, who thinks nought of grey theory and turns up his nose at the value of belauded systems. From childhood upwards he belonged, skin and bone, to Horace's genus, *irritabile vatum:* he had the passionate subjectivity, the delicate nerves, the elemental humour of the Muses, and the hot temperament of the born artist. That is why he always saw human beings, where others only saw things, only theoretical questions; that is why he could rid himself only with difficulty of a prejudice, a sympathy, or an antipathy, which some person had aroused in him; and therefore there lived in his mind plastically only what his eye had seen, and of the circumstances of the industrial workman, who until he dies is but a tiny wheel moving in eternal, symmetrical monotony within some monster machinery, he had scarcely any clear conception. Is it chance that the path so often leads the politician to some goal which he had never sought,—until one day he said ironically, that one got farthest if one did not know whither one went? The stubborn Prussian had gone forth to preserve the old Prussian State against Pan-German lack of discipline and national vertigo: he found an Imperial crown, and prepared vigorously for the time when Prussia was to lose itself within Germany. The feudal comrade of Stahl and Gerlach, the hater of bourgeois presumption, set out to fight for the ideals of the squirearchy: he became the exponent of a great bourgeois development, and led the burghers, whom he had formerly attacked, to the summit of industrial and commercial power. Only passion, that,

like a whirlwind, shortens the vision, can explain such a maze. And it is no exaggeration to say that Bismarck lived and died in passions; they glowed, like lava through a thin snow-crust, out of the master features of the old man's face. Here was rooted his strength, here too were rooted his wonderful tragedy errors,—if it is necessary to moralise on the errors of genius. In the new Germany a stormy temperament is not beloved; even in victorious Bismarck it has only been graciously pardoned. But the passionate remain young to their last breath, and even in parting, like the beauteous Pelide, arouse infinite yearning.

JOHANNA BISMARCK

Johanna von Puttkammer (*born* April 11, 1824; *died* November 27, 1894, at Varzin). Married Fürst (then plain Otto von) Bismarck on July 28, 1847. (See biographical notice of Bismarck.)

JOHANNA BISMARCK

On a grey overcast November morning of the year 1894 the owner of Varzin was up and about earlier than usual. The last few nights had not brought him much sleep. For weeks past the wife had been languishing by his side. An old disease, the first symptoms of which had made themselves felt decades ago, an emaciated body, that seemed to be composed of nothing but sinews and nerves, that might offer a tough resistance to the creeping malady, but could not open up fresh sources of strength to the withering life: thus there was not much left for the attacking force to destroy. So long as she could, the plucky woman held herself upright; the husband must not be alarmed. Soon, however, the pluckiest pretence was no longer effectual. A short-sighted eye even, let alone a tenderly watchful scrutiny, was bound to notice the decrease of strength. A disturbed week, the close of which saw the deterioration the doctor had dreaded. A dark, anxious Sunday. Is there still hope? Even for the shortest space of time? The reply brought mournful certainty. And when the second week-day dawned, from the narrow chest of the Fürstin Johanna von Bismarck the breath had fled. And by the side

of the dead woman's simple bed sat the husband and wept bitterly. Only a thin dressing-gown over his nightshirt, the bare feet in slippers; sat and sobbed like an orphaned child. Only the thought of her, he had frequently said during late years, tied him to a life that had lost its value. "I should not like to die before my wife; otherwise . . . Cato of Utica was a noble being, and his death, according to the reading in Phædra, always seemed to me a particularly decent one. In his place, I should also not have appealed to the mercy of Cæsar. These people, even Seneca, had after all more self-respect than is demanded by the fashion of to-day." Now his companion had died before him. On Pommeranian soil; at her beloved Varzin. When she, already a countess and the wife of a Ministerial President with the halo of two successful wars on his head, had been there for the first time, she had written to Herr Robert von Keudell, her lord and master's aide-de-camp: "Poor Pommerania! When it is overhung by rain and fog, one would fain despair. An hour and a half before reaching Varzin it becomes tolerable; and Varzin itself is lovely. A real oasis in a wearisome desert. The house is rather hideous, an old, worn-out monster; but the park is charming. God grant that we may stay here undisturbed for three weeks (Louis will surely be sensible?), and that Bismarck can thoroughly recover and rest in this wonderful lovely green stillness!" Louis (Napoleon) did actually remain sensible for a little while; yet Bismarck did not have a real rest. Johanna complained of the "daily flood of telegrams," or "babyish anxiety" of the gentlemen in Berlin, "who send everything here, every trivial rubbish for his opinion or his decision." The faithful one is asked to

help. "You know our great skipper of state sufficiently to be able to judge, what will annoy and what is immaterial to him. Sincerely I beg of you: stop it! Altogether Varzin, despite its beauty, has not been nearly so beneficial as I had hoped. Of wonderful benefit to me and the children; but what do we count? He is after all the main consideration." He, too, for seven-and-twenty years subsequently, derived much benefit from Varzin. By-and-by his woodman's cunning discovered "telegram-proof" places, where messengers could not easily track him. Twenty-seven long years the couple experienced the hours of their quietest happiness in the "rather hideous house." Then a veil of fog descended on poor Pommerania. Bare, with only sparse yellow-brownish remnants of autumnal splendour, the park awakens to-day; the mighty beeches and oak-trees are standing leafless. And in the half-darkened chamber of death sits the lonely old man. Like a winter storm through the branches of a crownless trunk, so a shiver runs through the limbs of the giant's body. Left alone after half a century of faithful comradeship. At the age of eighty compelled to adapt himself to a new mode of life. During their engagement he once wrote to his beloved: "If trees are rent by the storm, the rosin, like soothing tears, oozes out and heals." To-day he experiences it himself. As yet he had never seen any one of those nearest him die. Now the only Juanita, Queen Giovanna, Jeanne la Sage is dead to him. How will he bear it? Anxiously the children, the friends had asked it. Close to the bed's edge he sits in his proud nakedness and weeps. Will the soothing stream also heal this rent, which not merely affected the bark, but penetrated to the heart? To old people bounteous

nature as a blessing vouchsafed the capacity quickly to overcome grief. Even this passionate old man survived the blow. But like Schiller's rebel genius, when bereft of the pure companion, Otto Bismarck could exclaim on this November day: "The bloom has gone from my life."

The bloom of life? Was this woman really so much to this man? You surely exaggerate. We all knew her. A plain, small, insignificant woman, thin, jaundiced, nearly always ailing. An honest housewife and mother. Sound common-sense. The hardness of the North-East German squirearchy. Gruff, frequently bordering on rudeness, and of a Lutheran piety, verging on blind superstition. The Graces seemed to have avoided her. No glamour of personality. Not one of those ageing old ladies, by whose side even the freshest charm fades before our eye. A miserable hothouse plant without any fragrance. Not the kind for such a man. An error of the youthful senses, with which reason has to reckon subsequently, which habit gradually hallows. She never could have understood him. Never afforded him the splendid happiness which he was entitled to expect. He grew to heroic dimensions, she always remained the Pommerian squire's daughter. The old, old song of the marriage of genius. He did not make her suffer for it, was always tenderly anxious about her and deprived her of none of the sacramental rights of Christian wives. But the bloom of life? In the world's history of this life Johanna surely only played a secondary *rôle*. She is scarcely mentioned in the books on Bismarck, and even the panegyrists content themselves with scanty praise of her domestic virtues. And you will now contend, that by her death he had felt orphaned?

That I do contend. However noisily legend may contradict, I contend, that in a life not lacking in sudden storms of tragedy, this strong soul was only twice shaken to its depths: in March 1890 and in November 1894; when the Chancellor was roughly sent from his work, and when the husband lost his wife. Nevertheless I know that Bismarck, like every visionary, was at heart always lonely—had to be lonely. Did not belong to those, whose rule of life is described by Thackeray's ironical worldly wisdom. "In every man's career," says the author of 'Esmond,' "you would find a woman clogging him; or clinging round his march and stopping him; or cheering him and goading him; or bringing him the apple and saying 'eat'; or fetching him the dagger and whispering 'kill! yonder lies Duncan, and a crown, and an opportunity.'"

A clever, brilliantly variegated over-estimate of female ability, as brought into fashion again, with other Asiatic superstitions, by romanticism and Young Europe. Adam has degenerated into a Manfred, and the Eternal Feminine attracts even Faust, the tamer of the ocean. The woman is the man's mother, the man's fate. Such illusion had once fanned the hatred of women in ascetic church fathers; now it has called up in defence Schopenhauer, Hebbel, and Nietzsche, the Ibsen of Hedda and Hilde, Strindberg and the Wedekind of the day before yesterday. Too little of the man, too much of the woman. Goethe, despite Werther and Weislingen, Clavigo and Tasso, did not die of women. What they were in the life of Bonaparte we know. It was his *parvenu* craving to legitimise his power, that proved his fate; not Marie Louise. *Ducrot, une femme!* In the midst of his work. He

did not ask much more of them. And Bismarck? None could detain him on his way; none ever tempted him of a night into Duncan's bedroom. The most beautiful witch he would have laughed at, had she come to him with the pronouncement: Thou shalt be king! As Holofernes with a last grin laughs at the murderess, who, as well as his head, carries home with her to Bethulia the fruit of his loins. Only more politely, since he never indulged in any such risky adventures. In the whole of his life we know of none; not even one of smaller Babylonian dimensions. He may, like other young men, have sown his wild oats. That signified nought. However carefully one searches, pries into the letters, the clothes of the young squire, Captain of the Dyke, diplomat, no trace of any *odeur de femme*. No sexual passion has left on the avenue of his life any deep ruts, still visible in old age.

The impulse which prompted him, at the age of thirty-one, to ask Herr von Puttkammer-Reinfeld for the hand of Johanna, had blossomed in a purer atmosphere. A transient Rosalind passion had gone before; the intoxication of a summer's night. In his somewhat dissolute bachelor establishment at Kniephof, there one day awakens the longing for a dance. He has "Kaleb" saddled, his faithful chestnut, and rides twenty-seven miles off to Polzin. A little watering-place. There a beautiful Miss is said to fuddle all heads. Off then; and pay court well and truly according to the *ars amandi*. "Mad Bismarck," who has speedily outdistanced all rivals, is already seriously contemplating an engagement. With the night creeps up the doubt: Is she suited to me for life? The morning brings clearness: the characters cannot be

attuned to one another. Furious at his sudden heat he gallops away, spurs the chestnut too furiously, is thrown against the steep side as "Kaleb" falls into a ditch, remains unconscious, and only late he trots home on the patient animal. About this period he wrote to his Malle (his sister and *confidante*, Malwine von Arnim): "I really must—the devil take me—get married. This is becoming quite plain to me again, for since father's departure I feel very lonely, and the mild, damp atmosphere makes me feel melancholy and longingly in love." That was still the language of his springtime, when he read Spinoza and Hegel, Strauss, Feuerbach, Bruno Bauer, and with his "naked deism" got deeper "into the blind alley of doubt." Moritz von Blankenburg, his school friend, whom he met again as the son-in-law of the strictly orthodox Herr von Thadden-Triglaf, set about the difficult task of polishing up the young squire's soul, which had become spotty. He opened up to him the "circle of sincerely-living Christians"; here the stranger found "people, before whom I felt ashamed, that with the scanty light of my intellect I had endeavoured to investigate matters which such superior minds in childlike faith accepted as true and holy." At the Blankenburgs, on Kardemin, he made the acquaintance of Fräulein von Puttkammer, "a Pearl of Pommerania," and, according to Keudell's testimony, "idolised by relatives and friends." When a man of the March courts a Pommeranian young gentlewoman, the affair usually proceeds without the whirlwind of violent emotions. So, too, *anno* 1846, no lightning seems to have set their hearts ablaze. In Kardemin, Triglaf, Reinfeld they saw each other, and then travelled with Blankenburg to Berlin; and softly, like a budding seed beneath the last snow,

awakened the exhilarating feeling: we two belong together for life. A feeling from the moderate zone, as befitted the "Christian climate" of the circle at Triglaf. After Christmas Bismarck wrote from Stettin proposing marriage. No further doubts beset him. And seven months later the wedding took place.

The suitor was made welcome by the parents, although his reputation and circumstances left something to be desired. A handsome man of striking carriage. Famous as a horseman, a hunter, and, indeed, as a hard drinker. With the nimbus of one "who had often been at Court." A master of polite conversation, who never led to well-trodden commonplaces, nor indeed up too precipitous mountain-tops. ("*Il est plus causeur qu'un Parisien,*" the Empress Eugenie said of him later.) When he with his clear, pliant voice started some theme, a little circle would speedily form around his chair. No wonder that he pleased Johanna. How did the bride look? Diminutive by the side of the blonde giant (who in those days grew a beard). Dark, slim, very girlish. Reliable details are wanting. Nobody ever called her beautiful. Herr von Keudell, who knew her since 1845, says: "Her features were not regular, not beautiful, but curiously animated by speaking blue eyes and framed by pitch-black hair." The bridegroom has a better view of the beloved; he speaks of her grey-blue-black eye with the large pupil. Whoever has read Bismarck's 'Letters to his Bride and Wife' will feel instinctively that this country maiden was by no means devoid of personal charms. *Angela mia, mon adorée Jeanneton, chatte la plus noire:* only one over head and ears in love would use such expressions. Verses are quoted from all languages, entire poems in

English are neatly copied out for the bride. A 'Letterwriter for Lovers' could not offer more. His style reveals (as it also does, by the way, later on) the school of Heine; even Heinesque tendencies: the longing for the Harz mountains and for the North Sea can surely be traced to the 'Travel Pictures.' And it is often amusing to observe, how the joy in jocular antitheses alters the rectangular form of expression of honest piety into a grotesque zigzag. "The new life I owe, next to God, to thee, *ma très-chère*, who does not heat me occasionally with a spirit flame, but acts as a warming fire within my heart." Although the difference in ages is not a great one (in April Johanna will be twenty-three), the tone is frequently paternal. "Where should you in the future find a breast to unload what presses yours, if not in me? Who is more in duty bound and justified to share with you sorrows and grief, to bear your illnesses, your faults, than I, who have voluntarily pushed myself forward, without being urged to it by considerations of consanguinity or other obligations?" That is not in the least Heinesque; dreadfully correct. The tone is not always so fatherly and so superior; rebellious youth sometimes speaks out loud. From Berlin he writes: "Should your illness develop into anything serious I shall certainly leave the Diet, and even though you should be lying in bed, I shall still be with you. At such a moment I do not propose to allow myself to be hampered by any silly questions of etiquette." A pity it is that we do not know the answer of *Jeanne la méchante*. In another case the answer can be more easily divined. The "poor kitten" lies ill and the tom-cat calls down from the roof: "Could I fold thee in my arms, recovered and well,

and take thee to a verderer's in the densest, greenest forest on the mountain side, where I saw no other human face but thine! Such is my constant dream; the clanking machinery of politics becomes more offensive to my ears from day to day." Thus gushes, thus sighs and thus hates some love-sick fool; nothing to remind one of the "mad youth of Kniephof," nothing of the bristling deputy for Jerichow, "who in the farmer's evening prayer stands side by side with the devil." With the beloved alone in a little hut; "in the smallest cottage there is room"; only to hear no more of the machinery of State. That was her dream as well. When, after forty-three years, it was realised, when the old couple were seated in the Sachsenwald, under their Pommeranian beeches, the man was loath to miss the accustomed clanking of the wheels. "When I have dressed and trimmed my nails I have really done my day's work, and appear to myself entirely superfluous." Often did I hear such plaints. After the honeymoon he would not have stood it any longer in the little hut. He knew it himself; as far back as 1847 he wrote: "The spirit of contradiction always makes me long for what I have not got." And the wife, too, knew it well, although she sometimes spoke differently. "With his honest, decent, and fundamentally noble character," he did not fit into the "good-for-nothing bluff of the diplomatic world," and should "run away from all that nonsense." Then comes a deep sigh: "But I am afraid he will probably not do it, because he imagines that he owes his services to his dear Fatherland, which I consider perfectly superfluous." But that time Johanna had more clearly recognised her companion's character, than in the mood that prompted her to the

bold assertion, that one rood of his estate was of more importance to him than all politics.

How gladly would she have had him be like that. What lover would not prefer to keep her hubby to herself alone? Johanna would have renounced all pomp certainly without the least sigh. The joys of the table, dress, society on a large scale meant nothing to her; she opined: "Many gaieties make one a bore and lazy." At home, with her parents the resolute damsel, who on one occasion in a fire even did not lose her girlish head, had been accustomed to modesty. The mother, a very pious, pattern housewife, continuously occupied in polishing her daughter's body and soul, in scrubbing and scouring them; the father, "with his happy *laissez aller*," which his grandchildren, Marie and Bill, may have inherited from him; the whole cut of the household rather tight, the ornaments of life but sparse, like the yield of the soil east of the river Elbe. By comparison the menage of the Captain of the Dyke might be described as luxurious. And Prussia's representative at the Federal Diet could grant his Jeannette (who was now called Nanne) many a great wish. Music, until she met him, had been the sum and substance of her life. When Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata' was being played, she had noticed the first tear in his eye, and had felt: He is not so hard as he seems. Mozart and Schubert, Haydn and (more particularly) Mendelssohn: everything beautiful in music was to her an inexhaustible source of happiness. On Christmas Eve 1855 there stood in the Frankfort Ambassador's home by the side of the Christmas tree a magnificent grand piano, from the factory of André, Mozart's publisher. They certainly had still to be careful. When Bismarck, two

years later, commissioned his sister Malwine to do the Christmas shopping, he cautioned her: The opal heart for Johanna must cost not more than £30; diamond earrings (solitaires) are very beautiful, but too expensive; the ball-dress, "very light white *moirée antique* or something like that," must on no account cost more than £15, and a soft carriage rug "with tiger heads with glass eyes" at the most £3. In Petersburg, where "as Embassador with £4500 one has to be very careful," for Christmas gifts for the wife "only about £45" could be raised. Without a diplomatic post, without the official duties of representation, matters would have been far better. And the man need not have worn himself out with daily worries, and could have devoted more of his time to the wife and the children. That would have been an existence! One would have made music at home (to concerts Bismarck did not care to go, for music, he considered, should, like love, be a gift), passionate, heroic music (the gay and the calm did not appeal to him much), would have had none but people who suited the tone of the house about him, and shut himself off from the world, blissful and without rancour.

But it was not to be, and it was at least bearable as it was. "Twelve years we have lived together in unspeakable happiness; the tiny clouds that now and again floated across are not to be counted at all. The only real pain we experienced was when we were separated." That was a cry of joy from the spring of fifty-nine. Higher up went the journey of life—Petersburg, then Paris. Ministerial President, then Chancellor. Count, then Fürst. (When he was informed of this rise in rank, he said to his daughter with a smile: "It seems almost a pity; I was just

on the verge of becoming one of the oldest earldoms.") Since then the wife had really more reason for complaint. From a letter, in sixty-three, to Herr von Keudell: "In the most plaintive of minor keys, solicitude for Bismarck sighs incessantly through my heart. Never, never does one see him. In the mornings at breakfast, whilst glancing through the newspapers; an entirely dumb scene. Then he disappears into his study. Later to the King, the Ministerial Council, Chamber horror—up to about five o'clock, when he generally dines with some diplomat, till eight, when he only says Good-evening *en passant*, buries himself again in his horrid writings, until at half-past nine he is called away to some *soirée*, after which he works again until one o'clock, and then, of course, sleeps badly. . . . How the democrats behave to my best friend you will see from the journals. He says that to him it is 'Nitshewo'; but he is not quite indifferent to it." (In those very days Sybel had called him "notoriously unfit," and accused him of cowardice; Simson had compared him to a rope-walker, who, at most, deserves admiration for not having fallen as yet.) Added to this the danger of duels, assaults, enmity of old friends and social equals, illness, frictions at court, wars—at times enough to drive one to despair. Was it not then quite natural that in the heart of this woman there should increase from day to day hatred for the abominable thing that flaunts about under the name of "publicity"? Her husband it had almost taken from her; gradually it was now dragging the sons into its unclean workings. Overworked, fatigued from want of sleep, nervous, the loved ones came to the breakfast-table; tired, in cross haste, they took

their evening meal. Even the "horribly diligent" Herbert, the "baby of the family," who took more after his mother than after his father, after all the heavy night work in the Emperor's service, in the Reichstag, had to stand being derided and maligned in the press.

And to what purpose? If there had been at least some goal in view! But she knew from long experience which way the wind blew. At first everybody yelled and blustered against her Otto — for months, for years. Then it was seen that he had judged correctly, and had calculated what was necessary, from the sum of what was feasible at this hour: and everybody cheered him. It had always been like that. Why then do you at the commencement always make his life a burden? Why don't you cheer a little sooner? Because you have the twaddle of constitutionalism (or whatever you may call it) at heart? Because you want to give sugar to the vain monkey within you? Nonsense! You surely don't imagine yourselves cleverer than he? You may have a nimbler tongue. Don't know at all why he speaks just so, and not otherwise; perhaps on account of the king (who is also always being egged on against him), of the Crown Prince, of the boiling-hot Augusta, of the Russians, French, Poles. You can throw him out of tune, but you cannot play on him. For that, this instrument is far too delicate. . . . Once she had been in Parliament when he was making a speech; never again. She could not bear it; could not endure to hear how every gutter-sparrow whistled at him. I remember how she stared at her daughter-in-law, Marguerite, who had been in the Reichstag when Herbert was to be shouted down by furious

democrats of all shades. "I should have thrown chair-legs!" Another exclamation showed me, on another occasion, how little in forty years this wife of a Minister had troubled about Parliamentary formalities. In the Reichstag Caprivi's Army Bill had been discussed. On glancing through the reports the Fürstin was struck by the fact that the definite voting (generally regarded as definite) which closed the second reading was to be followed the next day by yet further voting, and she asked: "How is that, Ottochen? I thought the matter had been brought to a close yesterday." And the Prince was ready with the answer that appeals to the woman's intellect: "Dear child, yesterday it was the registrar's office, to-day is the church wedding." As keen as a blade, and with just a touch of irony; for to his Johanna the civil marriage was rubbish, only the wedding in church the true consecration. She did not trouble about it; neither would she have taken any notice of the Parliamentary rigmarole, had not her little Herbert been engaged in the debate. Army Bill? A matter of absolute indifference. All her life she was far too much a woman ever to think "objectively." Everything may turn out well or ill, have a good or an evil effect: who wants to know that beforehand? One has to side with the human beings. Measures, not men? How could the man to whom we owe the pretty family idyl of the Wakefield Vicar write such silly nonsense! Those were her ideas. It only depends on the human beings. Choose the right one, and he will do the needful. She had experienced it so often. Too often she had read in the nasty papers that the Minister, the Chancellor, was again pointing out the wrong road; and always it had been

an upward progress, to a clearer height. Even the meanest intelligence, she opined, must by this time have noticed it. She would have liked to stop her ears when the hideous song was intoned. What did she care for high politics?—the ogre that devoured her husband and the boys. And this extraordinary man by her side thought that he was not able to live without the monster! It cannot be helped; the wife must also take an interest in it. Just because it is the main object of his life. The fundamental difference of their interests I recognised plainly when, on the 15th of June 1893, I was seated by the side of the Fürst on a verandah at Friedrichsruh. It was the day of the elections in the Empire. The Fürstin stepped out of the house and said, she was so dreadfully excited: if only news would arrive. "Dear child," was the reply, "the matter is really not of such importance; a majority for the Army Bill, which I do not like, is a foregone conclusion in all circumstances." The woman looked up in astonishment: Army Bill and majority? That did not concern her. She had been thinking of her Herbert, who would certainly feel aggrieved by a defeat at the polls.

Herbert was the true child of her nature. The tall, handsome man had his father's figure, his blue, radiant eye; from the mother he had the temperament, irritable nerves, the talent of being chagrined by all sorts of things, the rapid change of mood from gay to grave. Mother and son loved to-day and hated to-morrow; loved and hated fiercely. From his mother, too, he had the impulse to see everything in One, in the mirroring of one eye, and to spread himself out like a soft carpet under the feet of the

One. A faculty not entirely without danger to a man, who has to stand on his own feet and has to fight his way through the motley market crowd. Fortunate, on the other hand, and a blessing to a woman who has to watch over a great man's hearth. Great men are rarely comfortable companions throughout life. Complicated sentimentalities they could not tolerate for long; neither with a strutting "individuality who wants to live her life," nor with a noisily-bustling housekeeper. Little Jeannette von Puttkammer was perhaps not quite simple enough for the giant, unto whom her frail body was to bear giants. The bridal letters must have occasionally put him out on account of their maidenly melancholy. Byronic world pain, sickly, confused gush. Johanna von Bismarck gave herself entirely to the one, and forced herself by rigid restraint to be simple and natural. Without grief, she gave up the two great passions of her girlhood. After the wedding the methodical study of music was discontinued, and she only played when and how it suited the dear master of the house; and when the first baby had arrived, riding, too, was discontinued, as it did not appear to her a proper pastime for a much-occupied mother. Soon the nest held three young ones; yet the watchword remained the same: "What do we count? He is the main consideration." And yet she was not in the least given to adulation. Her deep piety prevented that. Her "Ottochen" (in her letters she always writes of him as Bismarck, after the custom of the Northern German aristocracy) remained a simple being, a kindly, wise, noble-souled denizen of the earth, of whom she only knew that he saw a good deal further than most others. To want to develop an individuality with corners, by the side

of such an one; ridiculous presumption! He is the main consideration. A noisy household would have been obnoxious to her own gentle nature. The most thoughtful hostess; on the short journey from Friedrichsruh to Berlin every guest was provided with food and drink, and the arriving, the departing visitors were on no account permitted to cover on foot the few steps between the railway station and the house in the Sachsenwald. Not the model housewife, however, as depicted in the daughters' reading-books. Authenticated statements even related that Her Serene Highness allowed herself to be cheated at all ends and corners, that she would pore for hours over her housekeeping books, add up sedulously, and would be royally overjoyed if her addition amounted to twopence-halfpenny less than the sum written down by the tradespeople. But would never ask the market price of things, and would, for instance, quietly pass over a daily consumption of from sixty to eighty eggs. The menu she studied with almost tender zeal; for the husband she considered the best scarcely good enough; and Schweninger must have had many a hard tussle, before he got her to discontinue urging the beloved to excesses at the table. She only really gave it up when she noticed how well the new doctor's diet suited the Prince. Since then the coal-black Bavarian, by no means a saint according to the Church, had completely captivated her heart. Rather than that Ottochen should miss him for five minutes, she would climb up two flights of stairs, on her weak little legs, and down again, to fetch the professor's cigar-case. He, on the other hand, had consoled her in many a trying hour. Ofttimes of a night, when the Fürst was unwell, she would creep barefooted, only scantily clad, along the passage

leading to his bedroom, and listen, crouched into a corner, to his breathing, and had to be conducted to bed with gentle force by the watchful physician. . . . It is no easy task to be a great man's wife. Bismarck was indefatigable in tender recognition. When he addressed Johanna in a gentle voice, still in the key of the bridegroom, it sounded like a prayer for excuse: Be not angry, my child; it hurts me too, but it is not my fault that I could not devote still more of my life to you.

He never expected her to do anything against her nature. She need only attend those parties that suited her. He did not allow her rights to be curtailed. On one occasion "Frau Königin" (as Old William used to call his wedded firebrand) had discovered that the wives of Ministers were seated "higher up" at the Court table than was due to their rank. Some courtier was told off to find out how the difficult gentleman of the Wilhelmstrasse would look upon any proposed alteration. He made no bones about it. "My wife," he said, "belongs to me, and must not be placed worse than I am. But me you may seat where it pleases Her Majesty. Wherever I sit is always 'on top.'" Said it, and turned his back on the drenched poodle from the Court. Johanna herself, on the other hand, might order her duties and rights in accordance with her unfettered judgment; he could safely rely on the sure tact of her heart, and knew that she would fervently endeavour to see everything with his eyes. Such eagerness of devotion helped Johanna past the many dangers, which could not be missing from such a career. Bismarck's wife would have had her happiness uprooted, had she tried to spur the man, to check him, to regard him with a critical eye, if she

had merely questioned the use or disadvantage of his actions. War against the orthodoxy of both Christian Churches, against the "hyper-conservatives," a Kleist, even an Arnim, against the entire horde of demonstrating squires; those were hard blows for the good Pommeranian heart of a Puttkammer. But he did it; and so it had to be, and was probably for the best; else, of course, he would not have done it. This woman was suited to this man; the addition led to no fraction. After the daily friction at the office, he found at home an entirely non-political wife, filled only with the healthy egoism of the mother of a family. Yet not an unwise one; no gosling: her very letters show that she possessed an active brain and superior education, especially a finer sensitiveness than many a puffed-up *grande dame*. He had found a wife who, with all her affection, did not wish to clasp him with the arms of an Arachne, to dissolve him in pure love, but stood before his life's achievements in respectful silence. Johanna swore to it, that during the endless hours of public service, most of the time was frittered away uselessly, which could easily be saved, if the little ones would let the great ones quietly have their own way. For his work, however, the importance of which she did not venture to weigh, she had an honest respect. And in order not to interrupt this work with irksome pretensions, she had fixed up adjoining the giant's workshop a little life of her own to herself. If he spoke to her she was happy; did he remain silent or drew others into conversation, then, of course, that was just what he wanted. Her perpetual fear was lest by her carelessness the tiniest grain of sand might impede the smooth train of his thoughts. Easily as she got out of temper otherwise, she would never have contradicted

him with a harsh word, even though he had touched her most sensitive spot. One day at dinner (I was the only guest, nor was any other inmate of the house present) he asked: "I saw outside all sorts of little pious tracts; how did they get into the house?" "I had them sent for the servants' edification." "The servants you stuff with such things? That will never do, my dear child; I must insist on nothing being done in my house that in any way savours of capturing souls." Never before and never since did I hear him speak to his wife even with so little severity in his voice. She was silent; and has probably never again distributed edifying tracts among the household. She knew how to be silent. She concealed her bodily pain, sat silently at the table, ate nothing and drank nothing, and did not like any one to take any notice. For hours of an evening she forced the sleep from her eyes, spoke scarcely a word, and with courteous definiteness warded off every attempt to engage her in conversation. If a stranger happened to sit beside her at table and seemed to be worrying for topics of conversation, she would with a slight nod of the head indicate the master of the house, as though to say: "You had better listen over there! That is far more important; you are quite indifferent to me and I—be quite honest!—am the same to you." To be honest, to appear as one really is, without pose, without phraseological embellishment: that was to her the main thing. There was no necessity for taking any notice of her; neither in the house nor, less still, out of doors. When, in February 1891, in response to repeated kind invitations, I had been conducted straight to the luncheon-table in my travelling clothes, and stood in the apartment, lighted up by reflection from the snow

and by a powerful winter's sun, for the first time in the presence of the courteous giant, in the excitement of the moment I greeted the lady of the house less impressively than was seemly. Later on I offered an apology. "What for? That you had eyes only for him, I considered perfectly natural. And everything natural is greatly to my taste." My very maladroitness of the first few moments had earned for me her goodwill. Three years later Colonel General Fürst Bismarck (the title of duke conferred on him on his dismissal he never used) had been the guest of his War-Lord in the Castle at Berlin. Everywhere there were whispers of "conciliation," of important political arrangements. "Don't you believe a word of it," said the Fürstin. "Ottochen has been telling ballroom stories; not a mention of politics." She showed me a photograph of the route of entry, and according to her habit, many a forceful word crossed her lips. "What pleases me is, that Ottochen was after all driven once more in state through the Brandenburg Gate; otherwise . . ."

It was in that same year that, far from the Sachsenwald, he had to place her on her last couch at their home at Varzin.

Jeanneton, Nanne, the dear child, the always ailing, always languid patient. The wife, who lived on his glance, asked nothing for herself, a thousand times ready for every renunciation, for every self-sacrifice for the only one. Who combined God, Nature, Husband in one blessed trinity. Not a clever, not an elegant, not even a beautiful woman; even the grey-blue-black eye with the large pupil had long since ceased to shine with the brightness of hopeful youth. What little beauty she had possessed had faded early. Yet

she was one of those (according to Rochefoucauld) rare beings *dont le mérite dure plus que la beauté.* Of the faithful the most faithful. The man who stood beside her bier had gratefully experienced it during a long life. Whom had he now to fondle, to pet with a gentle fatherly hand, as the bridegroom once had promised, the gallant old man still loved to do? His offspring had long since grown out of his ken, had long since built their own nests. . . . When Eckermann, also on a November day, heard in Göttingen that Goethe's son had died, "his greatest anxiety was that Goethe in his advanced years might not be able to weather the fierce storm of paternal emotions." In Weimar his first call was on Goethe. "He stood erect and firm, and clasped me in his arms. I found him perfectly serene and quiet. We sat down and talked of all sorts of learned matters; and I was very happy to be with him again. We spoke of the Grand Duchess, of the Prince and many other things; his son, however, was not mentioned with a word." Lofty oak trees do not let their crowns be tousled for long by the wind. So, too, it was at Varzin. On the close of the pastor's funeral oration the widower plucked a white rose from a mourning wreath, took up the fifth volume of Treitschke's 'German History,' and left the room with a soft tread. "This is to put other ideas into my head," he said in the doorway. The bond that for nearly half a century had tied him to everyday life was severed. The wife, after all, dead before him. The white rose plucked. Nothing but his great passion for politics, Nanne's only rival, remained to occupy the master mind.

RICHTER

Eugen Richter (*born* July 30, 1838, in Düsseldorf; *died* on March 10, 1906, at Lichterfelde, near Berlin). Bismarck's most determined opponent in the Reichstag.

RICHTER

"GERMANY cannot and must not be governed much longer in this fashion. With such a system of government no one can transact any business nor make a pact. The Imperial Chancellor has mentioned in the House of Deputies, that I had stigmatised his economic policy as a gin policy. That is quite correct; and I am not in a position in any way to withdraw that expression." It was in the early days of March 1886 that the Deputy Richter uttered those words in the German Reichstag. Three weeks later he was answered by the Imperial Chancellor, Fürst Bismarck: "The Deputy Richter has said on one occasion, that I was a great distiller before the Lord. This hint he has supplemented by repeating his remarks about the gin policy; it meant to imply, that in legislating I am actuated by my interests in the distillery trade. This hint, surely, contains a statement which, if true, would be bound to lower me in public esteem. It would be easy for me to hurl back such coarse insults, and to accuse the Deputy Richter of exploiting his position as deputy in his own private interest; however, I refrain. I consider it beneath my dignity to pursue a quarrel of this kind. I believe the position in public life, which

I have attained in thirty years, is too secure for Mr Deputy Richter to drag me out of it. His weight is too light for that." On the very same day Richter replied that he had never accused the Chancellor of allowing himself to be swayed in his political actions by any regard to private interests; and then continued unsparingly to attack the Bismarckian policy. When his speech had come to a close, loud "Bravos" resounded from the left, while the right hissed fiercely. The tumult still continued when Bismarck rose and commenced his reply with the words: "Bravo! bravo! I quite share the opinion of those gentlemen who shouted 'bravo'; it was an excellent speech, but it is open to the same reproach that Deputy Richter made against me: It was not new. He tells me, that I always make the same speech. From the lips of the Deputy Richter during the past ten years I also have heard nothing new. I have been nearly forty years in Parliamentary activity; Herr Richter at least well over twenty. I know not how long we still have to live, so I should like to suggest, that we should not be required daily to tell each other something new. The deputy is far more fertile and much more practised than I am; for he has nothing else to do but to speak; he can carefully prepare himself, and he also keeps in practice, since he speaks several times every day, and when he is not speaking, he is preparing his speeches. I regret I am unable to afford time for such practice; I speak with difficulty. Moreover, he is healthy and strong; I envy him his personal appearance. But he has told us nothing new." That sounded amiable enough. Not for long, however. The irony soon became more cruel. "The deputy in his survey of European politics is, of course, far more competent in

his judgment, than I could ever presume to be." Reminder of the fact that in 1867 the Progressive party had rejected the Imperial constitution, "and since then it has done all that was in its power to hamper the working of the machinery." "Deputy Richter always wants the direct opposite of what the Government wants." "He still has a great future before him," but is an artist in rhetoric; "I am minister, diplomat and statesman, and should consider myself insulted if any one called me an orator." So it went on, and at the close, the statement was repeated: "He has accused me of having exercised my official influence in favour of taxation of the distillery trade, in which I am interested. He has heaped unmerited, gross insult upon me in the most unjust manner"; a suspicion was also thrown out that Richter, though accurately rendering the text of the speech containing the insulting innuendo, had "rapidly read it over and counted on the pace preventing any one from following that involved sentence."

This explanation (the tangible object of which was a corpse, since the spirit monopoly, against which Richter fought in full armour, had already been abolished) gives a rough outline sketch of the relations between the two men. Still, one important feature is wanting. In his first speech Richter had said that the Empire must not be dependent on the Chancellor's two eyes; even if Bismarck were no longer in office, "the Crown (as they say in German Parliamentary jargon) would safeguard the fundamental interests of the Empire." He was fond of such digs; he always considered the Chancellor too powerful, the Emperor too far back in the shadow of this gigantic figure, and the danger of an

all-powerful stewardship imminent. And every time he heard this accusation, the white-haired giant lost his temper. Naturally. That was the very weapon against which he had to defend himself at Court. "The man is getting too big. Has long since become too big. He usurps the power that is the Emperor's and King's. The people see and hear only him, and eventually forget, that for peace and prosperity they have to thank a Hohenzollern." From mouth to mouth it went. (Even after Bismarck's death this mental attitude, handed down from mother to daughter, was so general, that at Karlsruhe a scheme was evolved "to preserve" the memory of William the First.) Many a courtier, annoyed at the nimbus of the once so insignificant squire of Kniephof, made use of every opportunity to drop some of this poison into the monarch's ear; and later Bismarck often related how busily occupied with this labour were especially his detested "politicians in long clothes,"—parsons and women. Old William was certainly not vain; he did not care to stand exposed to all eyes in the glare of the footlights, and in Gastein had consoled Francis Joseph, his friend and ally, who complained of the gaping crowd, with the remark: "Just a few minutes' patience; when Bismarck arrives, not a soul will take any further notice of us." Little by little, however, the effect became noticeable. Even the most retiring prince does not care to play a Merovingian *rôle*—to hear day after day that he is being overshadowed, suffocated, by his all-powerful Minister; and, above all, he does not want such rumours to be credited by the people. Much that the Chancellor has said publicly about his feeling

of vassalage, his determination to follow unconditionally, right into the Vendée, his king, even though his policy did not please him, was inspired by the intent to dispel such suspicions. Is it not natural that his pulse beat faster when the leader of the democratic party also touched this chord? There you are, the whisper would go round, even down there it has been noticed; even they, who are certainly not guardians of kingly rights, are asking whether the Emperor is still reigning, or whether he has abdicated in favour of the Chancellor. Here lay a danger; and after almost every allusion of this kind, we find in Bismarck's speeches some expression of the wish to be soon relieved of the burden of office. A wish not quite seriously meant; for the man, who had never valued himself low, was convinced to the end of his life that he, more especially in international politics, could be of considerably more use to his fatherland than any one else. Then, of course, the Emperor could refer to such remarks and say to the whisperers: "There you have it; he is not glued to his seat. I must be glad if I can retain him." In Richter's speech on the spirit tax, the hint about the Chancellor's "two eyes" had probably proved more annoying than the (alleged) accusation, that he was making politics for the benefit of his own pocket. But do not the two stand out clearly? One knows the other's strong points, his weak ones even better; and both consider every weapon fair in this conflict. "This sort of government cannot continue for long." "The deputy does all he can to impede the working of the machinery of State." "Gin politician!" "Artist in rhetoric!" and so on. Be sure to strike the

opponent in the tenderest and most painful spot, and then, with contented joy, turn the steel in the wound.

Twenty-four years have since elapsed. Both men are dead. Richter, by twenty-three years the younger, had long been ailing; his fraction dwindled, he himself was forced to keep aloof from Parliament. He had already decided, by no means with a light heart, to lay down his mandate to the Prussian Diet. The physicians hoped to be able to allow him soon to take part in important Reichstag debates. Twice he had been absent from debates on the Budget. And twice had we heard, how the absence of one from among four hundred was felt. Not merely by a small number of fellow-members of his party. No; the old adversaries—men whom, during three decades, he had jeered at and inexorably fought, have risen and have said, how sincerely they regretted not to see him in his place. The aged Herr von Kardorff, whom he used to treat unduly badly, was sufficiently high-minded to send a greeting from the Reichstag to the wrathful one in his sickbed—a greeting that sounded almost like homage. And the Imperial Chancellor, Fürst Bülow, wished the sufferer a speedy recovery, and deplored his absence; he actually mentioned that he had recommended Richter to the Emperor for the post of Secretary of State at the Imperial Treasury. This announcement was received by our people's honourable representatives with "stormy hilarity." Although I am not pledged to Richter's standard, I lack the appreciation of such merriment; also of the, to say the least of it, untimely joke that caused it. For one thing, the Deputy Eugen

Richter had long since not been well enough to take upon himself the burden of an office of State. Secondly, his political life did not warrant his being regarded as a toady or place-hunter, who to-morrow is ready to serve under the system he furiously attacked yesterday, for titles and emoluments. The greatest part of his life's work were fights against protective duties, duties on food-stuffs, imperialistic expansion, and armaments; and he found not a single serviceable thread in the whole of Miquel's finely spun plan for an Imperial Financial Reform. Should he now, perchance, advocate all these matters in his capacity of representative of the Treasury?—the commercial treaties, the new Navy Act, beer and tobacco duties, a quarter of a milliard marks (twelve and a half million pounds) for South-West Africa. And even if in imagination these obstacles had been removed, a man of Richter's career was far too good for the post of an official, dependent on the will of the Imperial Chancellor and the Federal Ministers of Finance. But the joke was kindly meant, and in the laughter no echo of any malicious desire to scoff could be traced. For minutes you might have imagined yourself in the English Parliament, where on solemn occasions opponents treat each other to polite niceties, and where every Honourable and Right Honourable trembled with fear and shame, when it became known that Disraeli had called Gladstone "a sophisticated rhetorician, intoxicated with the exuberance of his own verbosity." We have not become finical owing to any such courtly manners, and were therefore astounded, to hear Richter's praises from such lips. *Où sont les neiges d'antan?* At one time outlawed as an

enemy of the Empire, and shunned even by his National-Liberal neighbours; for his very presence made the pure shudder. Later on deserted by those who, after the secession from Bennigsen's camp, and after Miquel's Heidelberg programme, under Bamberger's leadership, had gone over to him, then had left him again and accused him of incurable tyranny. Abused by the Social democrats, as otherwise only comrades are treated, who deviate by a finger's breadth from the main road of their dogma. And now suddenly, while still alive, he was endowed with a halo. All missed him, all wished him back; and the points of the swords with jagged edges, the resulting damage of his own skilled swordsmanship, were lowered in his honour. Three causes only, it appears, could explain such a change. Had Richter become more powerful, more conservative, more gentle? No. Twenty-four years ago he had a following of sixty-three, now of only twenty. Neither his intentions, nor the form in which he expressed them, had changed. So long as he stood upright, he attacked personally and tried to come to grips with the adversary, even when entrenched behind a rampart of journals. But he was by now about the last of the period of heroes in German history; and he was, with all his hard corners and sharp edges, a real good fellow at heart.

Did not we experience the same, as those who sat with him at work? How we abused and mocked him! When we had blackened him, we considered him never quite black enough. We called him retrograde, a schemer, blind, fossilised. And now we long to have him back. Not, of course, because we had then become converted to his conception of

political requirements. Nor because his methods of criticising the Budget seemed to us of such inestimable value. No; we missed the man, who, in his own peculiar way, as Fichte has it, always "pronounced what is." An Imperial Budget Council, so listless as we know them to-day, at which none of the essential points are ever mentioned, was unthinkable so long as Richter was in the firing line. Is the strong personality dying out because it cannot adapt itself so nimbly to the prevailing form of the struggle for existence as did the sleek "*struggle-for-lifeur*," whom Daudet discovered three lustres ago as a rare curiosity, and of whom to-day everybody knows dozens? Formerly there sat in the German Reichstag Mallinckrodt, Schorlemer, Windthorst, and the two Reichensperger, Kleist-Retzow, Stumm, Gneist, Sybel, Miquel, Bamberger, Stauffenberg, Lasker, Bennigsen, Virchow, and many others of individual charm—many, to whom one listened with pleasure, without wanting to ask whether he was "in the right." To-day there is wanting here, as in all other spheres, the strong personality. Richter was the last bourgeois parliamentarian of big format: that is why he was missed.

On the Rhine, in the district of Koblenz, there is situate the little town of Neuwied, with now about eleven thousand inhabitants. The place is not unknown in Austrian history; in the autumn of 1795 Habsburg troops fought here against the French, and eighteen months later Werneck was defeated here by Hoche. Neither will the historiographer of German Imperial unity forget the name of Neuwied. For it was here that Richter's fate was decided. The little town in 1864 had elected the twenty-six-year-old Government

assessor, Eugen Richter from Düsseldorf, as burgomaster; the Royal Prussian Government, however, would not ratify the appointment. The chosen was, in their opinion, too Radical. Bismarck (who at the time probably knew nothing of the unimportant matter) has often bewailed it. "It was a stupidity; in municipal service the man was not dangerous, and I believe, that with his gifts for arithmetic he would have made an excellent burgomaster." Surely also for larger and less peaceful communities, than the drowsy resting-place of the Herrnhuters, Baptists, and Old-Catholics. But it was not to be. The young assessor (a Government assessor in Prussia is a very different figure from what Richter could have looked: strapping, smart, with the scars of cuts received in duels, and an elegance of deportment, copied from the military officers) had already one disciplinary process behind him, would not consent to be sent to Bromberg, into exile east of the Elbe, left the State service and became a journalist; five years later he was already a deputy. For a period of four decades he has only spoken and written, written and spoken. With a strong organising talent and a still stronger determination to be a power, he confined himself to criticising the actions of those in office, of those in power. Is it surprising that his verdicts did not sound mild and gentle? When Laube (who also in appearance resembled Richter) was no longer allowed to rule on the rostrum, he became the most unmerciful of all ranters, and surely he had long enough experienced the activity of being in command, and had often accused the critics of unwise severity. Now, imagine one, who never had the chance of proving his creative faculties, and yet feels that he can perform more than

nearly all those he sees in high seats. Imagine a Mahler, if none of his symphonies had ever been performed, if he had never been called to the conductor's seat, but had been obliged to make a living out of musical criticism, and to satisfy with that alone the passionate longing of his being. Would he be gentle? Was Bismarck gentle when he wrote his articles for the 'Kreuzzeitung' and the letters to Gerlach, and five-and-thirty years later revealed himself to the publisher of the 'Neue Freie Presse'? Affairs are managed like that in Prussia, Richter could say to himself; to an efficient man activity is made impossible, only because politically he thinks differently from the accidental Minister of the moment, from any squire from the darkest East; and then surprise is expressed that so little is accomplished. Of course: if the existing forces are not utilised! Added to that a note of conflict in the air. Bismarck he valued at about the price of a Badeni from the Old March. Squire, unscrupulous, without any appreciation for the nation's real tasks, vain, brutal, and with a hankering for adventure. The whole intellect of the country against him; still later, Du Bois-Reymond actually regretted that Blind's bullet had missed its mark. Waldeck and Twesten, Vincke and Virchow, Schulze and Ziegler: such men knew what was good for the country. Even Schloezer was considered vastly superior to "Otto." They would at last destroy the superior power of the squirearchy, secure for all citizens freedom and human rights, and release the individual from the yoke of crypto-absolutism. In their wake came the ex-assessor Eugen Richter.

Did he hate Bismarck? Whoever read his speeches,

more especially during the eighties, had to think so. And even more so he who heard them. There stood the middle-sized burly man (the broad very hairy head, with a rather too small nose, recalled the Socrates type) in an ill-fitting coat and a pair of too short trousers; had his figures, his quotations from former parliamentary speeches at his fingers' tips, and shot arrow after arrow from the string of his bow up to the Federal Council's table. And almost always did he take aim at the corner where the sulphur-coloured cuirassier used to sit. Contempt, bitterest fury, scorn: they just whistled through the air; in between an occasional word of cool recognition, wrung with difficulty by the intellect from the emotions. "The Imperial Chancellor has in other spheres done extraordinarily well indeed and accomplished wonders." But he is useless for home politics. There he leads us to destruction. (Twenty years previously Sybel and Virchow had said the same thing of Bismarck's foreign policy.) And therefore he must be got rid of. At first his speech had not sounded so harsh. In October 1871 Richter asked, how long the reserves were to be kept with the colours, and whether an enforced fourth year of service in the case of the not mobilised cavalry regiments was justifiable. This interpellation, Bismarck said, was an inconvenient one; since it is not advisable to emphasise in the hearing of other countries and *vis-à-vis* the adversaries, one's own burdens imposed by the conduct of war and by mortgages. But he answered very politely (I believe it was the first personal contact between the two), and soon after he was even "very grateful" for one of Richter's suggestions, which he considered "materially well founded." But already in 1872 (in the course of an income-tax

debate) it came to a collision. The Chancellor had to listen to a charge of political hypocrisy, and the deputy, who thought himself accused of frivolously flattering the voter, somewhat vehemently repudiated this accusation. Bismarck replied: "I do not know the election addresses of the Deputy Richter, therefore I cannot have had him personally in view. I can assure him, my aim was much wider." That of Richter became narrower from year to year; and he forgot frequently, what he had himself once postulated as a rule of decent conduct: "It is contrary to parliamentary manners to suspect one's opponent of vile motives." Which he himself did but too readily. The "Herr Reichskanzler" became in his eyes the evil father of all evil. "My personality irritates you, my manner of speaking irritates you, in your opinion I am staying too long in this post. I can quite understand that; others also want to have a turn; but do not visit your annoyance on me; for I have told you explicitly: it is not by my wish that I remain. I would gladly make room for you; I should be delighted to see you operating. . . . I seem to act on you like the red rag (I will not continue the comparison), like the owl in the rookery: the moment I arrive, something is bound to happen. In the interest of getting on with the business, I shall have to become accustomed to the idea, to stop away altogether from here." Those were Bismarck's words as early as 1882. And then eventually he actually did leave, whenever Richter rose to speak. "It got on his nerves"; he could not bear it, hardened though he was against the wind and weather of public opinion, to watch his life's achievement being crushed, to attend its execution like a poor sinner. He read

Richter's speeches "to make clear to himself the limits to which a deputy may orally go, and which he should not overstep." The up-to-date Austrian or Hungarian would find these boundaries uncommonly limited. Bismarck was not called a liar nor a murderer. But the modest pretensions of the old parliamentary days were satisfied with an accumulation of *opprobria.* The great landed proprietor, the brandy distiller, dictator, autocrat, was placed in the pillory. *Toujours lui.* "I really do not know what they will talk about, should I suddenly disappear down a trap. Then the discussion will have no objective; the butts behind the target will then have disappeared, and the gentlemen will be obliged to fire at each other." He was perfectly unruffled if Windthorst pricked him with gentle, short, pointed sentences, when Bebel's trumpet tones summoned him, the most disgraceful enemy of the people, before the world's tribunal, or when Liebknecht, the pious phantast, roughly rebuked the incompetent diplomat. Only Richter drove him from the Chamber.

Why only he?

In the first place: The Progressive Party. From the very first day as Minister it had made his life a burden. It did not understand questions of power, the realities of national and (more especially) international politics, hated the army, which, though it had certainly made Prussia's greatness and had rescued Germany's unity from under the fire of the *mitrailleuses,* it treated still in the same way as in the days when two drunken officers, Sobbe and Putzki, had ill-treated a manservant. Whatever Bismarck did was always stigmatised as wrong by this party; and the issue has always proved him in the right; and at the

same time it boasted of having kept alive the German idea, in spite of the contrary wish of dynasties and statesmen. ("Yes, kept alive as in a cage, as one keeps a bird, a sparrow or a parrot, in a cage. Much has been sung about it, festivals of all kinds held: thus was the idea kept alive. But I staked my whole life's existence and, according to the progressive journals of those days, possibly my head—there were the speeches of Strafford and Polignac,—to have the possibility of gaining the King of Prussia's assent to a National German policy." These are sentences from the speech in which he warns against the fate of the thriftless who have "never done anything at the right moment.") These he regarded as a mixture of *doctrinaire* and place hunter. Are not we unjust, if we call him unjust? Was it not only human that he did not so soon forget? Secondly: In his opinion these people, who were now only dangerous to him through their control of the Press, were holding themselves in readiness for the Crown Prince, of whom it was said that he intended to "reign liberally." *Hinc illæ lacrimæ.* They could scarcely await the day when they would be permitted to eat from the great bowl. Hence the flood of personal suspicions and the threat about the Merovingian shadow. Perhaps, if the Chancellor could be chivied away or be got into bad odour with the old gentleman, the King would become weary of the burden of reigning and hand his spear during his lifetime to his son. This possible eventuality Bismarck had taken seriously into account, and had feared that the young Empire would not weather unscathed such an experiment. And thirdly: Richter was sometimes really dreadfully rude; his speech had an accent of deep

personal hatred, unrivalled even by Bebel's beautifully voiced howls of rage on the days of great reckoning.

As I only came to know Bismarck when he had been dismissed from the service, I had to ask others whether he had been really so gruff in his official intercourse. All of them, Herbert, Bucher, Schloezer, Schweninger said: No; all those stories are pure inventions. Bill Bismarck, who saw his father as a man, not on the heights of Olympus, would look wiser than usual, take a long draw at his fat cigar, and say: "No; rude he never was; but so horribly polite, that it made one shudder. He understood things so well, and scented mistakes from afar; therefore it was no pleasant matter to work with him." Very likely. Great, even only exceptionally capable men are always a trial to their subordinates. They demand the highest efficiency and become impatient, if the servant does not equal them in nimble dexterity. In Parliament Bismarck never was rude; but he could hurt worse than the most brutal. When his high, courtly voice, which sounded no different than over the Forster or Moët at the dinner-table, commenced quite gently, quite pleasantly to dissect the adversary, to peel the flesh from the skeleton of his arguments and motives, even the unconcerned listener began to feel hot and cold. This calm was worse than the most passionate outburst. He also repaid Richter, the cruel, with interest and compound interest. He was always being told that he was merely an orator and journalist, that as a contributor to, and as the publisher of a newspaper, he had an interest in prolonged parliamentary sessions; and that he took no interest in the matter, only in the person; and how wittily he was scoffed at, after having formed an electoral alliance with the Centre, as a hench-

man and serf of Windthorst! I will cite but one instance. When Bismarck in 1886 had negotiated with the *curia* about the question of diocesan peace, Richter in a form-perfect speech animadverted on this tedious diplomatic campaign; to avoid a pact with Windthorst, he said that the Chancellor had smothered the Pope with flattery, but, since the prisoner in the Vatican was in constant touch with the leader of the Centre, he had at length only got Windthorst's decision after all. A few sentences from the reply: "The previous speaker naturally gazes with grief and regret—I recall the picture of the tanner, who sees all his skins carried away by the flood—on this measure and its passing; the *fundus instructus* of parliamentary tactics will be lost to him, when, as I hope, peace has been brought about. At the same time he has endeavoured to squeeze out drop by drop what little poison there is still to be found in the question. That, of course, is not particularly surprising; and I only wish that professional diplomats and really practical politicians had the time to read the deputy's speech; I should like to request my foreign colleagues to have the speech translated, that they may see with what kind of people, what kind of views, and what kind of worldly experience I have to count and to contend. The deputy criticises my diplomatic attitude in a manner . . . I might say, like a country parson with his rural neighbours, picking a diplomatic note to pieces. He enumerates all the dreadful, incredible things I have done; and what does it amount to eventually? I have carrried out the simplest, most natural, and most courteous diplomacy. About this the deputy has spoken for nearly half an hour to the amusement of myself and of every diplomat who may

read it, and proved by it, that what is merely the daily bread of political life, appears to him as something incredibly dreadful, which he must expose in order to pillory the wickedness of the Government he is fighting. I am sincerely grateful to the deputy for having openly disclosed once in a way his candid ignorance of the manner in which political business is developed. It cannot possibly further his reputation in the country, when it is seen what a childish conception he has of affairs. He has assumed that I had once stated that he had seduced me on one occasion (in the matter of the Kulturkampf). Well, gentlemen, the seduction has always appeared to me in a totally different outward shape. It is not necessary to be a Saint Antony to be able to resist. . . . The deputy is surprised that I speak in polite phrases to a foreign sovereign, with whom we wish to live in amity. This astonishes me. He is surely in the same position with regard to the deputy Windthorst. He flatters him. Here he has to perform his feudal duties to the sovereign, on whom he is dependent as a deputy, and who can let him disappear down a trap." Was not such scorn calculated to make the blood boil? The deputy was denied all political understanding and all political conviction. Richter answered that he repudiated the insinuation with the contempt it deserved. And Bismarck retorted: "As regards the contempt in which I am supposed to be held by the deputy—I can scarcely imagine it—I will rather keep my corresponding feelings to myself. My education and my parliamentary habits do not allow me to give them full expression. Deputy Richter is, of course, frequently of a different opinion to myself; but he has such an amiable, winning manner of expressing himself that in my innermost

heart I have always cherished a certain regard for him."

Those two had their knives well into each other.

"I can scarcely think so." Why? Bismarck was not so vain, to believe that nobody could hold him in contempt. He had a sensitive ear; did he hear in the speech quite another sentiment than one of frosty contempt? I am inclined to diagnose it as affection, at first coyly concealed, and afterwards roughly repudiated. Yes: I do believe that Richter loved the giant; as much as an unlyrical heart is capable of loving. Oh! to work with him! To guide that will of his, even if only within a limited sphere! He dared not show it; for what the man did, could not please the disciple of forty-eight. And then he must have felt vexed, since the mighty one vouchsafed him not the slightest recognition. Had the Chancellor said but once, that even in the hottest of fights he was proud of such an adversary, probably it would have been Richter's happiest hour. But never ought else but: artist in rhetoric, article writer, place hunter. That poisons affection; but cannot altogether eradicate it. The rejected one is often inclined to disparage his beloved. Does she not squint a little? Unfortunately she has (you can see it when she smiles) a stopped tooth. The hand too fleshy. And that artificial figure! Certainly a case of compressed liver. And with all as coquettish as a peacock. That was Richter's judgment. He was not content until he saw a monster. An assuming tyrant, who only suffered sycophants about his person, allowed no strong personality to come to the front, and spoilt everything by masterful obstinacy, and the incapacity to recognise the requirements of modern times (exactly the same faults were later

ascribed to himself by rebellious partisans). Now he was content. He need not any longer stand on ceremony with the monster. He made himself believe that all the people thus saw the horror, who only held his position by devilish arts and by vile deception of the public opinion. Ten years after the French war, he said that Bismarck had "lost his prestige with the people." (Answer: "If he is right, I can but say: Thank God! For prestige is something dreadfully burdensome, something very heavy to carry, and of which one soon tires.") It was not hatred that could thus blind a clever man. Only the furious pain of despised love is capable of such shrill notes, falls on the once beloved with such rapture, tears the blood-stained rags from its wounds, and slashes his body with nails and teeth. Possibly this feeling remained entirely subconscious; Richter's speeches gave it the peculiar accent which none of any other man's had.

The waters were too deep. Prussia's Ambassador at the Diet had written in 1857 to Gerlach: "The capacity of admiring people is only very imperfectly developed in me, and it is rather a fault of my vision, that it is keener in detecting weaknesses than virtues." I found him precisely the same after a generation had passed away. Without any sentimental hankering after hero worship. Always prone to emphasise (also his own) defects more than the good qualities. "William the Great," this description forced upon official Germany by hereditary piety, he would not allow. William the true, the knightly, the modest: that might pass. When he spoke of Moltke he always referred to "a certain humourless thirst for blood, which the reticent dryness of the man concealed." On one occasion when I had passed

what seemed to me a very harsh opinion on Harry Arnim, he said: "I should be interested to know how you came to such a favourable estimate of Arnim. He was a . . ." If asked for his opinion on any one of his collaborators, he would lead off by marking the boundary lines of his capabilities and his endeavour; praise of his accomplishments followed in drops. Was it, indeed, worth mentioning that anybody could accomplish anything? That surely was the least one might expect. And really only of interest, as showing where things had gone wrong. On one occasion he talked to me about his elder son, whom he certainly loved dearly, for a couple of hours in such a manner, that I have never since been able to believe the legend which made him out a blindly infatuated papa. Whoever has discovered the artist in the politician will not be surprised at this trait. Those dowered by the Muses are constituted that way. Was Goethe fair to Wieland and Kleist? Heine to Platen? Sainte-Beuve to Balzac and Flaubert? Wagner to Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer? Zola to Hugo? Lenbach to Böcklin, Menzel, and Liebermann? Neither was Bismarck. And: "he understood matters too well, and scented mistakes from afar." What he said about Delbrück and Falk, Eulenburg and Puttkammer must not be looked upon as indisputable and exhaustive: it was primarily of value as an utterance of this remarkable personality. And above all the deputies! They made really no impression on him—even if they spoke ever so well. That, of course, was their business. They had surely nothing else to do in God's world. Whilst he, tired with his actual creative work, had to come into Parliament,

and there, like the Saracen's head in a shooting booth, had to stand up to all the rifles. This he told them quite openly; how extraordinarily low he valued all their doings. Never flattered them for the sake of their good-will. What a quantity of trouble he would have saved himself, had he, the born charmer, hit upon the idea to feed, according to to-day's Imperial fashion, the deputies and journalists on compliments! He never thought of it. That was not in his line. He, who inwardly was nearer to economic determinism than the pathetic believers in the Marxian church, was of opinion that behind every confession of faith there lurked some economical or social need, some manifestation of a healthy egoism or class feeling, against which rhetoric would anyhow be useless. He suspected people generally of much more uncanny and further-reaching plans than they in reality had. Those hallowed by the people's suffrage are generally quite glad if they are on good terms with the Ministerial President, if in his speeches he calls them weighty factors of public life, and tells them, privately, how very, very much, in spite of all opposition, he values their particular verdict. *Exempla docent.* That sort of pose Bismarck never could assume, and, consequently, he was astounded, that with his successors, the gentlemen of the *nouveau jeu*, in Prussia and in the Empire, everything went smoothly, as it had never done with him during all his long experience. What purpose would be served, for instance, if he attuned Richter to a friendlier mood? He wants a Parliamentary Government on the English pattern; later on, perhaps, a republic, free trade, militia, weak government, oligarchy of the classes enriched by commerce and

trade. All of them matters which seem to me quite incompatible with the national and international aims of the German Empire. He is not to be had for my policy. Whether he hates me or loves me, is, since I am devoid of all craving for applause, a matter of indifference to me. He wants to be made a Minister, or (worse, far worse) only see his doctrine crowned. What keynote he selects for his negation is, after all, of little moment. When I have slept badly, or am called away from my breakfast without having partaken of an invigorating drop, I am annoyed; but not for very long. And for the rest: *à corsaire corsaire et demi!*

The waters were too deep. Richter would not see that this Minister must not be judged as one of *duodecimo* format; that this rare man might demand rare confidence, must demand it. Neither would he see that this one, might his faults be ever so glaring, had to be counted with. He always seemed to think that he could overthrow him. And all his life he was from tip to toe so much of a *doctrinaire* of the best school, that he really did not understand the nature of political business; and with bitter scorn he derided contemptible compromises, if any party on any point had edged a little nearer to the one in power. All or nothing; like Sören Kierkegaard. In the domain of politics, which Bismarck termed the Art of the Possible, this motto was impracticable. Who does not bid with the others, is left in the corner; and soon will have nothing more to bid for. The father, who in his dreams saw the little Eugen in canonicals and a clerical collar, would have been able to adduce sound reason for such a choice of calling. Richter always took politics, which can only thrive

outside of good and evil, far too morally. Whoever had anything to do with the Government must in his opinion be afflicted with at least a *levis macula*. And in reading Richter's speeches, one was occasionally forced to the belief, that it was a Minister's greatest joy to invent fresh taxes. Against such a singular illusion wisdom does not safeguard the wisest, if he spends his life behind the ramparts of a party, that has never had a hand in actual government.

"Richter was probably the best speaker we have had. Highly educated and industrious; with unpleasant manners, but a man of character. Even now he does not swerve with the wind, and does not trim his policy, like Rickert & Company, in the hope of some day after all seeing the Emperor as well-wisher of his fraction." These words I heard from the hermit of the Sachsenwald. Now he saw the excellent qualities and spoke of them only, since he certainly had often enough criticised the faults. He was also pleased with Richter's sharp turn against democratic socialism. "On that basis an understanding would have been possible. But as long as I was there, he only let out his temper at me, and would, I believe, have joined in with Liebknecht *bande à part*, if he had been certain that an anti-socialistic policy would have given me pleasure."

Not until Bismarck is gone, many had thought, comes Richter's great time. It did not come. Much worry came, much annoyance in his own camp; and his power gradually dwindled away. Slowly the venom seemed to disappear from the old love. At first, when he might still anticipate that the outlawed would again bow his head in the sun, he did not treat him with kid gloves; what appeared about Bismarck

in the ' Kreuzzeitung ' during the first few years after 1890, Eugenius would later on probably not have cared to read himself. Then he saw the mistake. This squire was after all not so greedy for power as Richter had always thought (according to my diagnosis : had forced himself to think). He did not stoop to pick up some token of favour, did not lower his gaze in courtier's humility before the highest. All his old enemies, of course, missed him. Bamberger, who in his weakest hour had likened the orator from the market-place at Jena to a " dismantled comedian," once said to me that parliamentary life held no more pleasures for him, for " its chief beauty was the breaking of lances with the great man." To Richter it had been more. Almost the contents of a life. Something like what Wagner was to Nietzsche ; a bringer of happiness and a chimera. Often (and oftener year by year) he now sang the Chancellor's praises ; held him up to the Epigones as an example. And his note became ever freer, brighter and greater at such mention. Those hard of hearing, laughed. " Now he praises him ; only to annoy the new men." Keener ears understood him better. Was it a mistake that he could not make up his mind to lead his little troop into the Government camp against the granting of the two years' service ? He could not have done it.

Who, man to man, has fought his whole life long against Bismarck, does not surrender to a Caprivi. No, may the party go to pieces : To them, dear enemy Theodor, I follow thee not ! . . . And then came the great speech which cost Herr von Boetticher the Secretaryship of State (that it merely accelerated his fall, but did not cause it, I know for certain). The best thing ever said in Parliament about the official

policy of the post-Bismarckian period. Snow white, with an anxiously tense look on their faces, were the old Excellencies. On whom would the next blow fall? All the registers sounded. Anger, scorn, contempt, pathos, humour, brilliant wit. And like the sounds of an organ the refrain penetrated again and again: "Bismarck was of other metal than you miserable beings, whose life and its traces can be wiped out for ever by one puff of wind from above. He, you know, was not to my liking; but a man, and an honour to fight him. You and He! . . ." It seemed to me as though through the storm I heard another strain; heard the courting voice of an old man, who was calling to an older one in a distant wood: "Gaze here; Him, whom you considered the most objectionable, I slaughter in sacrifice to you; and if I often did you an injustice, is it not atoned for now? Just this one all have spared, so as not to give you any pleasure. My hand fells him to-day; let there now be peace between us!" This impression I tried to indicate, when Bismarck with a gleam in his eye had asked me: "What did you say to Richter?" He smiled, shook his fine-skinned head very gently, and remarked: "Yes, it was really always a pity about Richter!"

A pity? Certainly: that he had no opportunity in organising, in governing to test his strength. But otherwise his life was by no means an empty one. The last strong representative of political individualism did himself indulge in the luxury of asserting without limits his individuality. He cut, thrust, and shot at everyone who did not please him; and even at the nearest (and, unfortunately, far too often at the hares that came before his gun). He tramped onwards on a self-chosen road, without asking whether at the end

his trouble would be rewarded. He kept in the shade, and therefore never was in danger that the sun should coax away his mantle. Little was (and is) known about him outside. Only that in his apartments he had an enormous index-file and a large number of small birds, and that he, for long the prototype of a bachelor, had in his old days married the aged widow of a friend. He was hardly ever to be seen ; not at dinners, nor at feeding-times in the houses of the Ministers. None of us has ever seen him in dress clothes. And in spite of all (no : on account of it) he was popular. He was that, even in the days of wildest combat with the giant ; even to some extent among the latter's most faithful adherents. And, most of all, after his settlement with the newest era. And that he, in a hailstorm of abuse and derision, stood up against an attempted obstruction, and thus made possible the Customs' tariff, which he had persistently fought step by step, none of those have ever forgotten, who imagine the vital laws of Parliamentary life in danger, if a handful of rabid men can arbitrarily obstruct the majority's will. How foolishly the social democrats abused him then ! And yet he acted as he must ; he remained true to himself, as he had done in the May-time of the Caprivi era. A weaker man might have been tempted away. Great things were at stake. As Chancellor, a general who listens to the advice of the deputy Alexander Meyer on national economics, who, to stay on top, must openly and secretly support all anti-Bismarckian movements, and is forced by the power of circumstances to deviate from the path of the Prussian landed nobility's policy. An Emperor, who seems inclined to repeat the Cæsarean experiment of Louis Napoleon, to look to the masses for his sup-

port, and who is full of praise for Richter's journalistic campaign against "comrades without a fatherland." Already there stirred in the breast of the "dead men" (so they called themselves, since with Frederick their hopes had died) a fresh presentiment of spring. At length the hour of liberalism might be at hand to call it to the pinnacle of power. Only Richter's thick-set body seemed to block the way. I heard how those sitting with him in the same party union abused this awkward man, how they rejoiced over every defeat he sustained, even under Miquel's blows, how they called him blind, brutal, and the perambulating incubus of German Liberalism. I saw him as he left the meeting, where the tie had been severed, and the picket of Barth's adherents had broken away from the main progressive body. Uncertain was his step ; he reeled, wiped the perspiration from his broad forehead, and mumbled to himself. Presently he seemed to hesitate, he stopped, lifted his hat, and pondered. Then his lips were pressed together ; a stern resolve was written on his features. Now he knew what to inscribe over the split of the fraction. *Je maintiendrai.* Under this Emperor, Leo and Alexander notwithstanding, the time was not ripe for his ideal. The illusion, that a bourgeois party could within a short time "win back the workmen," never deceived him. This gruff German fellow would rather be solitary, than in a company that did not suit him. This earned for him hatred, but also called forth admiration, and even tender love. At his bier the enemies bared their heads, and the manly words that Herr Ernst von Heydebrand spoke, were the most decent reward that may be merited by the achievement of a man's life, into which the sun has not shed many of its rays.

"Iris is shaking her snakes; all the gods have flown and the thunder clouds are hanging heavy over Ilium." Whoever has watched the latter-day events without bias, will understand that many a German, in the already old-looking Empire, must feel like the Cassandra of our poet. Fog in the valley, fog on the highest peaks. Must not Eugen Richter then be doubly missed, even by his opponent? He was still of the old school; strove for real achievement, not mere semblance. The sweet smell of a great epoch still clung to his clothes. And when he with gloomy and forbidding face pushed his way through the serried ranks in the hall of the Reichstag building, the Father, seated above where the Quirites listen to the so frequently vacuous talk of the Tribunes, would point him out to the Son: "Have a good look at him! He is the last of an old type. He has wrestled with Achilles."

HOLSTEIN

Friedrich von Holstein (*born* at Schwedt, in the Province of Brandenburg, on April 24, 1837; *died* in Berlin on May 8, 1909). For thirty years he occupied a prominent place in the Foreign Office, and supported four Chancellors with his counsel. Grown up and trained in the school of Fürst Bismarck, he united with a wealth of experience and breadth of knowledge, iron power of work, unwearying zeal, unflagging energy, lively patriotism, and self-sacrificing devotion to the service for which he lived, to the exclusion of all ambition for outside recognition. His public record ended with his contribution to Maximilian Harden's 'Zukunft,' in October 1907. In an obituary notice appearing in 'The Times' on May 8, 1909, the Berlin correspondent of that journal wrote: "He will in many regards remain a pattern for all who worked with him."

HOLSTEIN

I.

"When the vanquished hero's fame
Is not sung to all our folk,
I will Hector's deeds proclaim
(Thus the son of Tydeus spoke).
Guarding hearth and home he fell,
Sank beneath the victor's blows.
Held in honour—e'en his foes
Still of Hector's prowess tell."

GROSSBEERENSTRASSE 40, near the Kreuzberg, lower middle-class houses, lower middle-class shops. Five minutes away, as near as the Yorkstrasse, purse-proud new Berlin glitters in a pomp of stucco. Here, between the Hagelbergerstrasse and the Kreuzbergstrasse, all is quiet. Old Berlin. No beer-palaces, no monster stores. Narrow cabmen's dram-shops; the baker, who has seating accommodation for three or four customers, buns, doughnuts, ice-cakes in stock, also, if wanted, will make you coffee, diffidently calls himself "confectioner." There even still remain a few green-grocers' cellars, with potatoes, cabbages, carrots, and apples on the pavement. The strands of telephone wires are attenuated, and the buzzing of the overhead tram-wire penetrates but softly into the grey stillness;

in summer all sounds are smothered by the roar of the waterfall, which rushes foaming through the Victoria Park. Standing in front of Number 40, you can see the white caps of spume. The best-looking house in the neighbourhood. Early Franconian; aristocratic as were the buildings of fifty years ago. On the stone steps leading to the front entrance a doorkeeper's child stumbles against the visitor, and the collision arouses its playfellows' mirth. Some wooden steps. Tug the bell-pull on the left. A slim white-haired woman with pleasant silent features opens. Frau Röber, the most faithful, the most reliable of housekeepers. She does not admit any one unwelcome; cannot be made to gossip by the sharpest of reporters. A narrow corridor, scarce wide enough to turn in. Three small rooms. Old, quite plain furniture, which impress a visitor from the west end of Berlin as antediluvian chattel. Only the most necessary articles. In the work and living room a writing-table, a diminutive library, some photographs, and other mementos. In the sleeping-room the bed of a forester or country schoolmaster; by its side, on a tiny night-table, a candlestick with a candle. Nowhere the slightest suspicion of luxury and opulence. Tiled stoves. Petroleum lamps. No gas. No telephone. And yet it was comfortable in these ground-floor apartments. Especially on winter's nights, when thick curtains made you forget that outside, round the next corner, there surged the life of the capital. It was then like in a provincial town; with some distinguished official, to whom the never-varying service clock had ticked throughout a life of bachelorhood, and who after office hours in cleanly solitude warms himself at the idea of being able to hold aloof from the world's

noise and strife. But he liked the visitor, whose nature and manners suited him, to discourse on these matters; as on something important, something significant far outside the sphere of duty of the master of the house. Yet just here, in this south-western corner of the Empire's capital, the pulse of German politics was more perceptible than anywhere else. High and highest dignitaries came to the Early Franconian, aristocratic house. The Chancellor, Secretaries of State, Ambassadors, Privy Councillors; Princes and Counts; aristocratic old gentlewomen and representatives of the *haute finance;* also from the ranks of the subalterns occasionally some proven person was admitted. It was surely to this ground-floor lodging that the Post Office SW 47 delivered the most interesting letters. "To his Excellency Privy Councillor Baron Fritz von Holstein."

It was he who lived here; had sought refuge here from the bustle of New Berlin, when even in the Anhalt-Dessau enclosure between the Western railway stations, which for so long, close to the focus of the street traffic, had remained countrified, the human scum became troublesome to him. Too many Privy Councillors, subterranean scribes, grocers' children, promenading girls (in this remarkable quarter many a householder, many a respectable family keep themselves, only on the high rent paid by one who makes an honest living out of prostitution). What did he need? Air, quietude, cleanliness. Even in his sick-room it was never close or stuffy, no speck of dust ever offended the eye; almost noiselessly came and went the housekeeper; and from the empty spaces of the Kreuzberg district even on oppressive days a cool air wafts into the neighbourhood. It was a long

way, on the other hand, to the Foreign Office. So much the better: those seeking advice did not too frequently invade his house, and he liked to stretch his legs early of a morning. Walking was his greatest delight. He could, he had to walk about alone for hours, and on such a march he had the most useful ideas; and even as a septuagenarian he came not infrequently on foot from the Grossbeerenstrasse to the Grunewald colony. He was not cut out for a stay-at-home. His wish was to have been a soldier, and he groaned when the parents of young Friedrich August Karl Ferdinand Julius, who had rapidly been promoted into the upper forms of the Köllenische High School, destined him for a lawyer's career. About the fifties. The army had not as yet the reputation which later on William and Roon, Bismarck and Moltke earned for it; the memory of 1806 had not faded, those of the forty-eights decried the "soldateska," and the impecunious nobility looked for a more remunerative calling for its sons, than that of an officer. Holstein would certainly have made a good commander of a regiment (possibly not a very easy-going one, but possessed of a stern sense of duty), would have led a division with wise circumspection and finally become Quartermaster-General, possibly even the successor of Moltke. (On the Versailles painting, which shows the officials of the Imperial Chancellery in field uniform, the bearded young diplomat does not present the least military appearance.) To lead under fire: that had been his highest ambition. The renunciation he always felt like an old wound which aches in bad weather. The young official at the Court of Justice had to set his teeth not to groan aloud. The next move, when only in his twenty-second year, was towards the misty

Olympus of diplomacy. Here was something to be seen, to experience, to fight for. For the Fatherland; even without sword or uniform. That he was not born for the constraint of blind subordination, he himself admitted smilingly in his later years during hours of calm retrospection. It seemed after all as though the father had chosen the right career. In the narrow apartments of the Grossbeerenstrasse his Excellency was a mighty gentleman, who scraped to nobody; he was that, the three superiors notwithstanding, even in the office; at the Königsplatz the chief himself would have been submissive. And was mentioned too often. Far too often for Holstein's taste. His man was Blumenthal, of whom Bismarck has said, "The newspapers never mention his name, although he is Chief-of-Staff in the Crown Prince's army, and in the conduct of the war has merited almost as much praise as Moltke." That was how Holstein would have had it. Only by connoisseurs did he wish to be regarded and properly appreciated. Hidden from the others in the deepest obscurity. The advice to live in the shade was to him surely the most precious conclusion of epicurean wisdom. The aim of his loftiest ambition: to lead under fire and yet to remain invisible. An obstinate purpose to be powerful in the soul of a sensitive being, who cannot endure a fierce light, and shudders under public criticism, as under rude unveiling of his person: politically and psychologically a difficult case. In the workroom the wanderer after all was happiest; it remained his true home. The glamour of Court life did not attract him. All too soon the inner freedom withers up amid such surroundings. The advice to seek the personal favour of the highest in the land he would probably have

declined with the words spoken by Schiller's cuirassier in 'Wallenstein's Camp':—

> "My friends, let those take up the task,
> Who in his sunny favours bask,
> Who with him feast in his golden room—
> All the splendour is theirs, ours but the gloom,
> Ours but the turmoil, the toil and the pain;
> While nought but the pride in our hearts do we gain."

We: the officials. "Who else but his soldiers make him the mighty potentate?" The civil soldiers in the writing-room. He, who so gladly would have worn the King's uniform, felt proud to be a civil servant. Even when his hair had turned white he would fly into a fury if Parliament or the Press depreciated the efficiency of the officials or actually recommended to look for substitutes outside the confines of the office. "That would indeed be the last straw, to make our people fretful, to deprive them of their authority, the major portion of their reward, and to heap on some banker honours which our best can scarcely attain in a long life." Not even the Foreign Office, in which he himself found much to censure — only three of its representatives were at last admitted to his presence, —must be blamed outside. And the Secretary of State, who had, formerly at least, seemed to him the least of the possible evils (Count Posadowsky, for instance, since the immolation of Woedtke), had lost favour with him for not standing up for his office with the expected determination. "It is not the fault of the officials; those people should first enquire whether elsewhere the work is done as decently." Thus speaks a stranger, standing aloof from life and its many intersecting circles. Holstein had experienced much. Had seen the strongest statesmen and diplomats in

their dressing-gowns: Gortschakoff and Thiers, Disraeli and Cavour; the swarm of the mediocrities; and in Germany from Schleinitz, Robert Goltz, and Harry Arnim down to the Ambassador of the day after to-morrow, every one who in any way served as a cog or tiny wheel in the machinery. At the age of twenty-three he was Bismarck's youngest in Petersburg (then already, under Schloezer, a worker, not a nobly loafing attaché), and hearkens to the first preparations for battle for German supremacy. London, Washington; during a pause caused by an office conflict, shooting expeditions through Northern America. Silent work in Prussia's Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In the great year the Federal Chancellor calls him to Versailles and bids him take up the pen, when, after the conferences with Thiers and Favre, matters were brought to a conclusion. (The inkstand and the pen, used for the document of the preliminary peace of the twenty-sixth of February 1871, Holstein preserved for decades and gave them away as a present only when he felt the evening approaching.) He remains in Paris, assists at the overthrow of Arnim, and is called to Berlin in 1876. Was he not rich enough to be able to think of taking up the leadership of a mission, or did he realise early that he was better fitted for the segregated *chiaroscuro* of the Central Metropolis than for the top of some hillock visible from afar? Only on holiday trips did he ever leave Berlin again. 1876 to 1906: thirty years in the Foreign Office. Intimate intercourse almost only with official humanity (civil and military); and the habit to talk with the visitors almost only of matters pertaining to his sphere. Messrs von Bleichröder, von Mendelssohn, von Schwabach he probably scarcely ever asked

to speak to him on the development of financial affairs. Why should he? That was not his business. Others might look after that. Each brain, he thought, only held a definite quantity of knowledge; and if I overburden mine with other stuff, there won't be the necessary room for political matter. The heads of finance were to report to him what they had heard from Petersburg, London, Paris; should hold up a mirror of events which could not be visible from the office; and should hear what was considered desirable from to-day to to-morrow by the head of the State. Holstein did not wish to become antiquated; he endeavoured to recognise the evolution within his domain: and yet never noticed how the world (what we call by that name) was changing, and with what uncanny speed the limits of power were being moved. I do not believe that in his calculations he ever allowed for Japan's poverty as the force pressing for expansion, like in the Prussia of the past; he only counted with: a strong army, an efficient fleet, and a cautious and brave business Government. He credited the French, when Iswolskij was in Paris, with having decided upon a course of action, which the creditors of the Russians, Turks, Serbs, and Bulgarians, in view of the confused state of the Orient, were obliged to deny themselves in all circumstances. Court, Government, Army: other factors did not seem to him of any importance in his reckoning. That diplomatic reports made little or no mention of the political economy and moods of other nations, he did not consider reprehensible. "Do you think they work more diligently elsewhere?" Certainly not; only here and there, where the economically strongest have dethroned the Tchin and appointed themselves procurators, perhaps

more practically and after more modern methods. Such speeches Holstein would have listened to from only One, whom he esteemed "above the average"; and even His word would have made him impatient ("kribbelig" (fidgetty) he called it, frequently in his speech recalling Fontane). Then his usually upturned head would droop and the fingers beat a tattoo on the arms of the chair, grip the knobs, or move up and down rapidly. And then, when the other had finished, it came quite softly: "You may be right, but it would be of no help to me did I see it differently." Obstinate he was; not vain. Determined to have his way; never to let it become known that he had carried out his resolve. To renunciation he had become accustomed by his long official career. In his position he was only possible, if he left all the glory to the chiefs. Whether he always bore it lightly? Certainly during the last three lustres, for then the competent, German and foreign, knew full well who managed the affairs. Before that? Bismarck's assistants had to content themselves with the reputation of being good hodmen, That any one could essentially help Him, not even His own staff would believe. To Him the Lord gives it in His sleep. Holstein had admired him with fanaticism from the very first hour. When Bismarck, after the Babelsberg audience of the twenty-second of September 1862, was appointed Ministerial President, Schloezer (later on the staunchest of the faithful) opined that the leaders of the opposition in the Diet, such men as Vincke, Sybel, Twesten and company would soon make him sing small. "Otto is no character. And Otto is too fond of lying." Holstein believed in Bismarck's star. Up to the last hour? During the second half of the eighties he found him slacker, his

policy not simple and his tactics not steady enough, and he scented danger in the suspicious drift from Austria. The *cauchemar des coalitions*, which disturbed the Chancellor's nights' rest, did not trouble the Privy Councillor. And the Russian reassurance seemed to him almost treasonable to the spirit of the Austro-German Alliance. "Anything tangible is not to be expected from it; and if it leaks out, we are branded as deceitful fellows." To be constantly effacing oneself in the Giant's shadow: no easy matter for a man imbued with a strong spirit of independence. He, too, would probably like to see his thoughts and will take shape occasionally. Hundreds of times, on the other hand, has Holstein asseverated, that he had never desired Bismarck's retirement, nor ever had a hand in the Titan's overthrow. When he noticed how mines were being laid all around, he implored Herbert to call his father quickly to Berlin; otherwise the explosion would be inevitable. But Fürst Bismarck arrived too late from the Sachsenwald on the field of battle. When the Emperor complained about the "lectures," which the old one forced on him in the presence of others, Holstein wrote a long letter in pencil from his bed of sickness to Herbert. H. E. could tell H. M. everything he considered necessary, under four eyes, unsparingly; in the presence of his ministers, the Emperor, with his temperament, would simply not stand it. (At the Crown Council meeting dealing with the Westphalian miners' strike, Bismarck had spoken very gruffly.) Whether this letter ever reached the Chancellor, the sender never learnt. Herbert said nothing about it; and for any fresh attempt at smoothing matters down, it was soon too late. Bismarck went, Caprivi came, and Herbert would not

remain. In spite of Holstein's urgent advice. "H. M. is sure to treat you like a raw egg. If for no other reason, but not to further irritate your father. The latter will, of course, answer you all questions; and eventually he will come back again. Your position therefore can only improve, you will reign here like a viceroy." In vain. The father, when requested by William to persuade Herbert, had replied with Octavio's words: "My son is of age." (He probably did not fancy the idea of leaving the elder as hostage in Berlin and thus be forced to be anxiously circumspect.) The son said: "I stand and fall with my father." And parted from Holstein, too, in open enmity. The latter had persuaded Caprivi to say a word in the palace against prolonging the Russian Assurance treaty. (Schuwaloff was becoming importune: delay was therefore out of the question.) The Kaiser is quickly won over. Now the experts of the Foreign Office had still to be heard. Where is the treaty? Holstein, because he is known as an opponent of the plan, has not co-operated, and hands the question on to the director of the Chancellery. The latter brings the document to the Chancellor. The chieftains of the political department are summoned and requested to give their vote in writing: and all (even General von Schweinitz, the Ambassador) are for declining the Russian proposal. When the Secretary of State, Count Bismarck, arrives at the office, the matter is settled. Johanna's impetuous son causes a scene with Herr von Holstein (who at Herbert's wish has moved into the room nearest that of the Secretary of State). "You could surely have prevented this stupidity. You seem to regard me as a dead man somewhat prematurely." The Privy Councillor replies that he has not the power to

prevent the Chancellor from carrying out his intentions. (On describing the scene to the more stolid Bill, the latter remarks indifferently: "Whether the old ass saw the treaty two days sooner or later is surely immaterial." Since then nothing can shake Holstein's belief that Herbert had flown into a passion only for the one reason, that he, by order of his father, was going to devote the last few days of his official career to a renewal of the treaty, of which Count Schuwaloff need not then cede anything more.) No bridge spans the chasm. Herbert, who had been the older man's intimate friend, confines himself henceforth to a distant greeting, no longer discusses the question of his staying on, and leaves without bidding farewell to Holstein. Who, in the house of Bismarck, thence onward is decried as a traitor and arch-enemy.

Was he really that? He shrugged his shoulders, gazed listlessly over the rim of his spectacles, and said that if some day it became necessary, he could prove by a huge pile of intimate letters, what really had estranged him from the family and the person of the Chancellor, and how he had acted in those weeks of the crisis. So long as he could avoid it, he did not wish to disturb this "historical dust." He cannot be blamed for not resigning the office in March 1890; even Bismarck never expected that. Did not Schloezer remain in office, and even Wilhelm von Bismarck? A man who loves his work, and hopes still to be of use. A Prussian, who has consecrated himself to his King to his last breath. And was it not a good thing that at least one remained, who knew the business into its farthest corners? Who only wanted to serve the *res publica* to the best of his abilities, and sought nothing further for himself? Holstein scented the danger;

felt that he would be suspected of the intention to climb to the height over the body of the fallen giant: he therefore announced that he would not accept any higher office. This renunciation, he imagined, would be all-sufficient. For he did not want anything for himself; even avoided any possibility of being drawn into the Emperor's immediate circle (because he knew the "superior's" temperament, and noticed at once that any such intercourse would not be agreeable to the Secretary of State Marschall). Illusion. Every one knew that the Privy Councillor had no craving for titles or dignities. But had he not now reached the goal of his desire? In front of him *dilettanti* without knowledge or experience. By his side only Paul Hatzfeldt (the friend) and Radowitz (the enemy) as supporters of the tradition. At last an opportunity, *de donner sa mesure;* at last, to show what he is capable of doing by himself. Such a state of affairs he desired for years; he could only attain it when the two Bismarcks were dead or outlawed. Rejoicing of Goethe's masterless magician's apprentice:—

"Has he gone! Then who shall stay me?
Has the wizard dropped his wand?
Now shall all his imps obey me,
Stand and serve at my command.
I have marked his skill,
His sorceries tragic—
With my powerful will
I shall cap his magic."

The old master has not returned home; although the need became considerably greater, than under the rush of waves of the broom's despotism. And by playing at being master he succeeded in no miracle. Simply because he was but an apprentice, and though

able to remember words and formulæ, he could not command the genius that liberates and subdues the spirits? Or because even after the master's departure he was not allowed to do as he liked in the kitchen? Thus he saw it; so should all see it. "For those, who know the inner working of our foreign policy, no refutation is necessary of the contention that mine was always the final decision. For instance, it is known well enough, even outside the Foreign Office, that I had no share whatever in the preparation of that chain of political actions, which critics frequently have regarded as causes of the Anglo-French rapprochement in April 1904: I am referring to the Krüger telegram, the Bagdad railway project, and the Anglophobe speeches in the German Reichstag. In every single one of these cases I found myself face to face with either an accomplished fact or one well in train, face to face with an already completed change of points. This is no pronouncement of any views; I am showing, how far off I was from pointing the direction in German politics." Thus he wrote to me three years ago; and he had wisely chosen the examples. The telegram addressed to President Krüger he would indeed never have sanctioned. Never have seen in the Jameson raid a sufficient reason for so sudden an alteration of course. Six months previously, on board the British flagship *Royal Sovereign*, in the uniform of a British admiral, Wilhelm had said: "I can assure you that one of the happiest days of my life, one I shall never forget so long as I live, was that day when, in the course of an inspection of the Mediterranean Fleet, I boarded the *Dreadnought*, and my flag was hoisted on her for the first time. But I am not only an admiral of your

fleet, I am also the grandson of the mighty Queen of England. I should like to express my sentiments and the sentiments of my officers . . . and drink to the health of the British fleet, her admirals and officers." On the 3rd of January 1896 he arrives, put out by Salisbury's uncompromising attitude, at the Chancellery and demands that Something should be done immediately for the Boers threatened by a superior force. Helpless Uncle Chlodwig sends for the Secretary of State (who as an orator had already entangled the Empire in the Boer war in South Africa), Herr von Marschall sends for the Colonial Director, Paul Kayser, who is to edit the wording of the telegram, which had been agreed upon after much debating. Holstein ought to have been called in for such work; the best stylist. He would probably have exploded; would have run out of the office on the spot, instead of consenting. Lifts, as he hears of it, his hands to heaven in raging fury: "'Without appealing to friendly Powers for help.' That clearly means that we should be available against England! How could you allow this sentence to pass?" The Secretary of State: "You would understand, did you know what was planned, and what we had to prevent by the compromise." When the British lion started roaring, Holstein said: "There you are." With his consent the Bagdad railway ("the dry road to India") would also never have been treated as a political matter, as an Imperial affair. And he did not know that Count Bülow (who used to draft his speeches on international politics and to lay down their main lines with him) would in the Reichstag add a passage which was bound to offend England, and especially her Colonial minister. All that is

correct. That the "inevitable final decision" need not be sought for in the Wilhelmstrasse, it was unnecessary to prove in self-defence. But here Holstein pointed the direction. No German, no foreign diplomat has ever doubted it. The chiefs did not know much of the business and were dependent on him, who, *rompu au métier*, could gauge the action's consequences. Even Bismarck, who was considered all-powerful, often bemoaned, while still under the old master, the inability to enforce his own will. It is almost always difficult to trace the causality in political affairs. "Politics," says Lagarde, "are woven slowly and of very diverse threads. No report will ever state whether a minister had to break in with considerable trouble some headstrong charger of a prince, before allowing him out of the manege into the street, whether a prince gladly tolerated so-and-so many descendants of the Maccabæans among his surroundings, and why this or that treaty was concluded." Who will then define the boundary lines within which anyone not burdened with tangible responsibility could be made responsible before the tribunal of history for the course of events, for what happened and for what was left undone?

Holstein frequently erred; particularly badly when, in the fateful hour, in order to preserve for some time at least the appearance of continuity, he counselled a brusque turning away from Russia. Frequently he has been debited with mistakes, which either were no mistakes at all, or should not have been entered on the debit side of his account current. It was prudent that in 1899 and 1901 he warned against a precipitate acceptance of the alliance pro-

posals of Chamberlain, and later against the officious offers of Hansen and Betzoldt. "He who wants to dine with the devil out of one dish, must have a long spoon," was Chamberlain's fundamental idea, when in Leicester he advocated the triple alliance, which should embrace Germany and "the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race." The "devil" to him was the Gossudar of all the Russias. Germany was to furnish the weapons against the Empire of the Tsar and the French Republic, where during the Boer War the fury of the Breton wolves had awakened with an angry howl, and the aged Queen was daily abused for an old hag. The preparedness alone would have improved Britannia's strategic position and offered possibilities of profitable negotiations with Petersburg and Paris. That was the main object of the plan; its originator counted on William's desire, after the pro-Boer telegram, to reconquer the Britons' love by storm. To a tenable alliance with the performance of equivalent counter-performances, neither Edward nor Salisbury, who, if it was a question of big matters, could still become very lively, his old age notwithstanding, would never have consented; in both Houses of Parliament, too, there would scarcely have been a majority. Germans have to thank Holstein that he did not walk into the trap, did not then already drive the bear into the jaws of the whale. And no less for declining Paris garlands, since Delcassé had so rudely avoided his (not importune) advances in Eastern Asia. And Morocco? Is the verdict correct, by which he, he alone in this sorry affair, is condemned as ringleader?

We could have come to an understanding about Morocco in 1899 with England (possibly) against

France; in 1901 with France and Spain for certain against England. That both offers were declined was wise. Germany's sphere of interest must not border close upon the Mediterranean; and the Shereefian realm had to remain as a bone of contention between the Western Powers. Our haste in building a fleet and the impetuous attempts to win over Islam arouse fresh suspicion in London. Edward and Lansdowne, Delcassé and Cambon endeavour to wipe out from memory the recollection of Fashoda and of the Boer noise. The fruit of these endeavours, the Franco-British Colonial Treaty of the 8th of April 1904, is viewed in Berlin at first without annoyance. That only breaks into flame, when in the Reichstag the Chancellor is reproached with indolent weakness and want of national pride. When Bülow went on furlough, he impressed, with one foot already in the carriage, on his companion: "Keep an eye, if you please, particularly on Morocco! That, my dear Holstein, is to me the principal concern." Now, in spring, he opposes the Court generals, who recommended the Emperor to effect a landing on the Barbary coast. It now only remains for Spain to riddle the April treaty. But England is too powerful in Madrid (or Radowitz, as Holstein maintains, too weak): on the 3rd of October Delcassé and Del Muni sign the *arrangement franco-espagnol.* Nothing more to be done? Holstein still refuses to believe that England has actually given up the Sultanate of the West, which since Nelson's days had always appeared to be of so much importance; rather that France was to be duped and done out of the price of waiving her Egyptian claims. But he is just as little responsible for the carrying-out of the newly emerged plans and planlets, as for the

initiative. "Up to the end of February 1906, when my Moroccan activity came to an end, all the more important among the directions issued by me bore not only the Chancellor's signature, but most of them had previously been carefully discussed with him. . . . This being the case, I am justified in declaring the statement, that in any phase of the Moroccan question I had pursued other aims than those indicated by the Imperial Chancellor, and had employed other means than those sanctioned by him, to be a pure invention, to be entirely untrue." That is what he said in the pages of 'Die Zukunft' on the 19th of October 1907. He was in favour of the landing in Tangiers, not of the speech (and had a nervous shock when he read what William had said). He was against the proposal for coming to an understanding, which Rouvier caused to be advanced by private persons in Karlsruhe and in Berlin. "Because, a few weeks after the speech in which he declared that he would deal only with the sovereign sultan, we could not disavow the Emperor, we could not treat with France." He was in favour of the conference, for in his brain existed the conviction that we were able with a determined policy to vanquish the British concern. Gave up his office, when such policy was no longer to be hoped for. And still he reeled, as though mortally wounded, when on the 12th of March 1906 the retreat was ordered. All this was often discussed here, often regretted. Afterwards he never again spoke to the Chancellor about Morocco. The statement, that during the period of the Casablanca crisis he had been an agitator who fought against the conclusion of the treaty, can be proved to be untrue. Any treaty drafted by his friend Kiderlen and perfected

(in co-operation with M. Jules Cambon), he would never have opposed. But from material reasons he was also in favour of the agreement: for this field promised not another sorry blade. Events have proved him right; from the Algeciras Act to the decision of The Hague: a black series. I cannot blame the man, who credited the German Empire with sufficient strength to fight its way alone through the thicket.

(Morocco: this chapter he wrote himself; not only this one. The historian may expect a great deal from Holstein's accumulated store of letters. The family Bismarck, Paul Hatzfeldt, Abeken, Schloezer, Bucher, Hohenlohe, Waldersee, Eulenburg, Bülow, Mühlberg, Monts, Marschall, Stumm, Tattenbach: no mean correspondents. And if the letters written by Holstein were collected, they would prove to the politician and to the psychologist a gold-mine of rare dimensions; also to the *gourmet* for style, who only wants to enjoy verbal art. For this Privy Councillor had learnt from Bismarck how to write; clear, strong, and hellishly personal.)

He had probably hoped to die in harness; and he, too, like Bismarck, was disappointed. Under Bernhard von Bülow he could indeed consider himself perfectly safe. Him the father ("the Holy Power": thus the pompous, nimble Secretary of State was known at the office) had placed into his charge. "Look after my boy a bit when I am dead!" And the ageing Fritz had remained true to his trust. Bernhard had no grounds for complaint. Bucharest—Rome: not a bad jump for one, whom the malicious Count Münster called a "hasty observer on the Lower Danube," because he had made use in his official reports of what Roumanian globe-trotters had brought red-hot from

Paris. To Berlin he was brought by Phili, not by Holstein. The latter said: "If some day you intend to become Chancellor, you had better stay away; as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs nobody has yet spun silk." But Phili's mind was not to be changed, the Italian cook decided after some hesitancy to follow his master "into misery"; and the new Secretary of State soon filled the most grateful *rôle* (and had the best prompter) in the Empire. When he became Chancellor he offered von Holstein the Secretaryship of State. No. Too little knowledge of political economy and not sufficient confidence in his quickness of repartee. No; even though the Chancellor offered to relieve him of the entire burden of representation. Up to the time of his gruffly motified severance from Philipp Eulenburg (whose Viennese ambassadorial policy Holstein first called "phantastic," later, more rudely, "operatic") everything went smoothly. Since then it was whispered into the Emperor's ear, that the old one, who had always avoided the beckonings of Majesty, was a world-estranged numskull and a dust-covered, petrified bureaucrat. Moreover, a fanatical enemy of France. (The silliest of all the legends. Holstein was almost passionately fond of French culture, literature, and manners, and always got on well, even in moments of difficulty, with the statesmen of the Republic, from Thiers and Gambetta to Courcel and Hanotaux.) Certainly an awkward customer, who had best be sent, to extract all poison from the gossip, in the wake of Delcassé. But Bülow had already refused this dismissal even to Fürst Herbert Bismarck, whose friendly opinion he then certainly still valued. Wait and see. This irritable person will himself, surely, create the opportunity. Right. In the autumn of 1905, he

discovers that the press department is leaving him badly in the lurch; that it has for a long time launched nothing effective about Morocco. Its head, Privy Councillor Hammann is summoned, and quietly replies that public opinion did not seem to him ripe for this affair, and that cautious reticence was therefore necessary. "Rubbish!" The white-haired hot-head launches a petition of discharge (the third) into the Chancellor's office. Untenable state of affairs. Though not the title, he had by age and experience acquired the status of a director of the political department, and had hitherto always got on well with his colleagues. ("But ask us not how," twittered the gnomes of the house.) If now some gentleman, taken over from the publicity department, wished to cook over a fire of his own and would not give in to him, chaos would be returning. He or I. Either the press department, as part of the political department, is subordinated to me, or else I am superfluous here. The Chancellor knows his old patron. The flame always breaks out immediately from the roof-tree. Why spoil Christmas? Under his Christmas tree Holstein finds a letter promising remedy. And eight days later the order is published by which the entire political department is subordinated to His Excellency; which includes the press department. The refractory Hammann has to report himself. "That he has never forgiven me; he has hated me ever since, and let loose his horde upon me again and again." Really? The press manager had himself probably become a little Holstein; concerned himself pretty well with everything, not merely with the news writers, and had far greater power than was indicated by his title. He also has a head of his own.

Suspected by the profession to be a weather-cock; but is the chief's right hand (which, be it understood, must not know what the left one is doing). The two Privy Councillors were bound to collide some day. The old one says of the younger, that his is but a policeman's talent without the suspicion of an idea of political business; the younger of the old one, that he drives the Chancellor into entanglements, which only a giant could break through, and that after the first shower of hail or cannon-shot he complains of the monstrous attacks to which he is exposed without his fault. Meanwhile Holstein has proved the victor. Battle or skirmish? Behind the front there lurks a more powerful enemy. Where are the good old times when Troubador, Oysterfriend, Spätzle walked about in harmony? Herr von Kiderlen, denounced on high on account of too vigorous jokes by Philipp the Good and banished from the innermost circle. Holstein the Black Man of the Court. Only the Troubadour still sounds his lute. His Viennese reports were so extravagantly grotesque, that even the Emperor mocked at them with sarcastic glossaries in the margin, and the abandonment of his career was enforced not by merely private reasons. But even in retirement the Fürst zu Eulenburg and Hertefeld is not idle; nor even without influence. Count Uniko Groeben, Radolin's First Secretary, has written to him from Paris, that so long as Holstein remained in office peace could not be thought of; at his very name the comb of the Gallic cock became distended with fury. This is confirmed with troubled mien by Messrs Albert Honorius of Monaco and Raymond Lecomte. One, who so anxiously longs for peace as he of Liebenberg, dare not remain silent. The Privy

Councillor's petition of discharge has not as yet been finally dealt with. He himself requests Bülow to hold it over until it is decided who shall become Richthofen's successor. Herr von Tschirschky arrives. The latter had previously treated the kingmaker of German diplomacy with the utmost devotion, and after Delcassé's fall had congratulated him on the successes of his Moroccan policy. Now he knows that the hour has struck. Every inch a superior. "Holstein will never stand that." The calculation was correct. Caprivi and Marshall, Hohenlohe and Bülow: he had seem them all small and then saw them great. Yesterday, still on top, almost an adored Lord Protector; to-day, assistant, who must endeavour gradually to convince the chief. For sixteen years he bore it; even the highest, he reflected, has a super-highest over him, and must act as though he were the hodman of a supreme master. Those of the craft surely know how, and by whom the work is done. But Tschirschky as trainer to humble submission: that he could not bear. Even anyone more tractable would not have fetched and carried to the nod of this statesmannikin, fashioned in Hamburg and Luxemburg. On the 2nd of April he writes to the Chancellor: "The Foreign Office is too narrow for Herr von Tschirschky and myself." Request for granting the petition of discharge sent in during the Christmas week. Long, intimate conversation with Fürst von Bülow, who urgently advises him to persevere. But receives on the following day a letter, in which Holstein informs him, that a duplicate of the petition of discharge had been sent to the Foreign Office, "since it is best for my dignity and your peace of mind to make an end of it." Once more the

Chancellor attempts to delay the petition; causes the original to be locked up by Privy Councillor Scheefer, and the new master opposite to be told, that he will personally settle it. Only when he is lying on his bed with a rattle in his throat, is it sought out; and in the Easter week the discharge prayed for is graciously granted to Privy Councillor Baron von Holstein.

Of ten diplomats, eight at least will swear to it, that Bülow was glad to be rid of the awkward monitor. The sickly Tschirschky, they say, would not have dared on any account, from the very first day of his new magnificence, to act in opposition to the recognisable will of the Chancellor. The Fürst has protested, that he wanted to retain Holstein. The latter believed him, and held the trio Eulenburg—Hammann—Tschirschky responsible for his overthrow. He of Liebenberg, when tackled, gave his great word of honour. "Never! How is it possible to suspect me of such an action!" A duel with pistols? Not likely. In spite of his cataract, the rabid one might hit. Rather would the singer and hero increase his collection of insults by one more letter, in which Holstein calls him a "miserable being." . . . On the 8th of May 1909, Holstein died. If he were living to-day he would watch with youthful vigour (and, I believe, with amazement never previously experienced) the gentle attempts to thread connecting strands between Japan and Turkey, and to strengthen the British concern by the coalition of two Asiatic powers which threaten Russia on both flanks. (To strengthen? Shintoists and Mahomedans, who at first sight seem to have nothing in common but hatred of Christianity, and possibly *sympathie de peau*, might some day dictate even to the "tight little island," the sun of

which even Rosebery himself sees obscured by reddish mists, the conditions of a treaty: for against the united hordes India could not long be held. A theme for German statesmen to ponder over.) Nearer to His Excellency's heart there would be another care. For goodness' sake no fervent craving now for Russian caresses! Such sentiments cannot be extracted from a Slav democracy. If Nikolai Alexandrovitch wishes to chat with William; good and well. We are courteous people; but have no desire to lean against tottering walls. And should be as unwise, as in the darkest hours of the post-Bismarckian era, if we made Franz Ferdinand and Aehrenthal shy. We have no child's-play behind us, but a hard fight for German authority. Is that to dwindle again, because Nikolai graciously and smilingly condescends to wink, and we gaze up enraptured to the height so recently hidden by clouds? We have opted as we should have done: for Austria; which meant this time, for the Germanic right to independence and sensible expansion. The mildest flirtation with those, who yesterday wanted to hem us in and cripple us, can alienate from us our only ally. The longer we remain cool, the greater will grow the greed, East and West, for business conventions with the German Empire. Therefore, no inflating of these events. What happened yesterday may repeat itself to-morrow. As yet the drama in South-Eastern Europe has not been played to an end. After the interval come the acts "Crete" and "Bulgaria."

Holstein lived to see Germany's victory; and experienced, after years of woe, Germany's liberation as a scarcely expected pleasure. Had he not always said so? That no genius was needed to carry on,

backed up by four million of the world's best soldiers, decent and fairly remunerative politics; only courage and steady nerves? Exactly the same thing would have happened in the case of Algeciras, if we, instead of listening to waverers, had bravely held on. Who would have dared to break a lance with us. England without an army and with antiquated naval guns? France, with her panic of Uhlans of 1905? Russia, without a loan and with the still fermenting duma? The idea was to intimidate us; and the bluff only succeeded because we became soft. That is over. The jagged nick is half ground away. The doubters have been shown what German determination, even in bad weather, can accomplish. And the deceased had helped in this. In the country inn in the Harz Mountains, where he was fond of putting up, because there was only room for one lodger, he wrote the long letter in which he solemnly exhorted the Chancellor not to allow himself to be crowded off his perch and unreservedly to tell the Emperor, the King of Prussia, what stake for him, too, was on the game. He recommended Herr von Kiderlen, who proved himself more than merely an Oriental specialist. Unmasked the vain bungler Iswolskij in all his secret by-paths. And at length he again found work that was not irksome to the patriot. Even on his sick-bed, on a meagre diet, offering little to the stomach and nothing to the palate, he conferred and wrote busily. The body was withering away; the spirit seemed rejuvenated. Not until after his discharge had he read Bismarck's book ("because while in office I had not the time for unnecessary annoyance"). It helped him now to a silent triumph. "Nearly everything that is said about Russia, Austria, and the Balkan is out

of date, and was even then inaccurate; and the like of us are scolded like schoolboys for having missed the mark. That it is not stupid in all circumstances to side with Austria against Russia is obvious to-day to a child. And what I have had to suffer on account of this conviction!" A pity that just this spring he was unable to move his limbs. But the recollection of old mistakes, real or attributed, could be spared him. The rest is silence.

Even in the heart of the King. He spoke no parting word over his dead servant's grave; did not decorate the coffin of the royalist with a wreath, which he bestows upon every commonplace Excellency. (Why? Of this we shall speak when our eye glances from his official sphere to Holstein's extra-official life and to the tragedy of his experience.) But in this case of wooden boards there rested one, who only in severe sickness experienced real happiness, who from his last bed had reached the goal of his youthful longing: to lead under fire, and yet to remain at every step out of sight of the eye, and out of reach of being pried upon.

II.

Goethe: There was a time when the study of natural history was at such a low ebb, that you would find the idea generally held, that the cuckoo is only in summer a cuckoo, but in winter a bird of prey.

Eckermann: This view still exists among the people. The bird is used as a simile for the basest ingratitude. I know people, who will on no account allow themselves to be talked out of these absurdities, and who cling to them as firmly as to any article of their Christian faith.

Goethe: The ornithologists are probably quite pleased if they have managed to classify, moderately reasonably, any peculiar bird; whereas Nature carries on her game unfettered, and pays no heed to the divisions made by dull humans.

Eckermann: The cuckoo is a bird by itself, with a clearly defined individuality of its own. We know of it that it does not itself do any hatching, but lays its egg into the nest of any other bird.

Goethe: Everything I have read about it gives me a great interest in this remarkable bird. It is a highly problematic nature, an open secret, but none the less difficult to solve, for the very reason of its evident openness. With how many things do we find ourselves in the same predicament?

Three years ago I wrote for the first time about Holstein, who in the spring (with the brilliants added to the Red Eagle) had been dismissed. Compared him to the Grey Eminence, M. François le Clerc du Tremblay, known to history as Father Joseph, and who, during fifteen years, guided France's International policy in obscurity. "Holstein was even less vain than the Provençal from the Touraine, and only felt really at ease in his retired corner. He did not want to be visible, nor even mentioned. Was miserable, sick with annoyance, if his name appeared in the Press. He was satisfied with the possibility to work and the consciousness of power. Both these he possessed. *Bene qui latuit bene vixit.* . . . Was this existence, that so shyly hid itself from

view, to be called a happy one? Herr von Holstein reached the goal of his ambition: he has governed, in his retired corner he has tasted all the joys of power, and has regarded himself at times as the man of destiny. Around him also the lurking hatred; and near the heart it often burned like a scalded, skinless spot. Among the blind this one-eyed was king. But if he looks back to-day: where are his empires situate? Germany's International policy was never worse, its results never so sparse, as during the three lustres of the Holstein government. When Bismarck went, France was left lonely. When Holstein went, Germany was in solitude. No empire, therefore, conquered, no useful progressive tradition created. No warm home found in the hearts of men." The object of the portrait did not resemble a heroic giant; much less a dwarf. A drossy personality, whose great and, in the main, noble will-power had not been endowed with the proper creative spirit. The first echo came from the region of the Chancellor's office. "In one particular your verdict does not do justice to Herr von Holstein. His subordinates he always treated well. He never was haughty. Many an one he has helped, and he leaves us therefore the kindest recollection." Six weeks later a letter arrived from Holstein, which was published here on the 18th of August 1906. Of the Bismarck catastrophe he would not speak, until the third volume of 'Thoughts and Reminiscences' had appeared. "When that will happen, I know not; should I depart this life before then, I shall leave instructions with some competent person to publish of my papers any that, according to the state of affairs, would seem appropriate or necessary. I am told that this period is being awaited

also by others." (Here he was thinking in the first place of Waldersee's widow and of Boetticher; but did not know that the rights of dealing with the dreaded third volume had fallen to Fürst Guido Henckel von Donnersmarck.) The main purpose of the letter probably was to fend off the suspicion that he had directed the International policy of the German Empire, and had maintained "direct or indirect relations with His Majesty": the most obvious object. The fallen man, about whom at that time among the high officials scarcely any one cared, could not bear the consciousness of impotence, and was determined to show that he was not done with yet; that he had not lost all possibility of activity with the loss of his office. ("They have got me out of office and then helped me later on again to power," he frequently said to me with a smile.) That is why he emerged into the light, for the first time unurged. Why did he come to me? Because I had relentlessly attacked the people whom he regarded as his worst enemies, Philipp Eulenburg and Herr von Tschirschky, and because he had experienced in his own person that such attacks, like many another in the realm of wood-pulp, cannot always be dismissed with a smile. The polite rejoinder, based on historical facts, which I published in the same number, wound up with the following sentences: "Never has any tale-bearer attempted to set me against you; I have shown you the sources from which I drew, and am ready to supply any further information desired. It is to be feared that my attempt at portraiture has in some respects proved an indifferent likeness. What would that matter? Would your picture of Bismarck resemble mine? Taine's Bonaparte appeared to Prince

Jerome to be a miserable caricature; and the portrait that pleases the original is not always the most honest. I have endeavoured to arrive at a just verdict. But even the blindest injustice need not cloud Your Excellency's bright mind. You are now free, subservient to none raised up by the favours of chance; and can with the freshness of mind, to which the style of your letter bears witness, teach friend and foe, how an upright man, versed in the business of politics and who is not afraid of any thicket, can serve his fatherland." A fortnight later a clever man of my acquaintance, whom for long I had esteemed highly, a man of noble feeling, asked me: "Would you not some day like to talk matters over with Holstein at my house? He seems to be rather keen on it." With pleasure. The first impression: a professor. Fairly tall and lanky. Dark, old-fashioned lounge suit, and broad walking boots. The head of a bookman, with a bald high forehead and a somewhat protruding, rather too broad nose above the bushy, white beard. So long as he wore his spectacles. When he had taken them off the energy and the fine lines of the bare part of the head became more marked. And, in his sixty-ninth year, by no means an old man. Firm as though in the fifties. On account of old age infirmities, they could never have pensioned him off. He, for a certainty, worked more than Chancellor and Secretary of State together; harder and quicker. And would then march, as a recreation, to Tempelhof or Paulsborn. During the first few minutes, we were both of us rather stiff and embarrassed. Then he came to the heart of the matter. "Here I am; look at me closely and then answer yourself the question, whether I resemble the picture you have been shown

in Bismarck's house. Without you, my enemies would never have got me down; and, that you should have believed the greatest man of the century, for that no sensible being can bear you a grudge." Thus he drew a line under the past. And we approached each other quickly. Went that same hot noontide for an hour's walk through the shady park avenues. Since then he has often visited me; if he was not ill, at least once every week. And each week I received at least one letter. He valued the workman so much, that he would not allow me to save him the long distance. "Certainly not! I have nothing more to do in the world, and you work for ten. No; I shall come on your less occupied days, shall not mind being denied admittance, if not convenient to you, and insist on your retaining your lounge jacket. If at any time you should have nothing better to do, and announce yourself with me, I shall be grateful. But ceremonies do not exist between us." And thus it continued. On the eighth of March he came for the last time. After a few drops of light claret, he was seized with gastric troubles and a fierce attack of coughing; had to lie down, but seemed to be fairly recovered after a while and was able to go to the stopping-place of the tram. A cab? "No, thanks." After that he never again left his lodgings. There I still sat on several occasions by the side of his bed.

In the course of years we became sincere friends, and he gave me many proofs of deep sympathy. But memory must not be allowed to dim the view. Holstein was different from what he had been shown me from afar. Not greater: cleaner and of finer material. Bismarck's psychology dissected the man; took from him the polyphony of sensibility and endea-

vour, and sought motives for all his actions on the basis of a dominant will. Holstein to him was a man of darkness. One who looks upon everybody as a scoundrel and argues: If I don't trip him up, he'll trip me up. The bird of prey, which, being unable itself to hatch them, lays its eggs surreptitiously into strange nests. "He really was more a pupil of Arnim, than of mine. Only of use in the basement. Spots on the inner iris." A gentle critic Bismarck never was. From Frankfurt he wrote in 1857 to Gerlach: "The capacity to admire human beings is but moderately developed in me, and it is rather a defect of my eye, that it detects weaknesses more readily than excellence." Thus he remained; ever inclined to emphasise the defects (even in himself) more sharply than the good qualities. If asked about one of his colleagues, he was sure first to indicate the boundaries of capacity and intention; praise of performance might possibly be added subsequently in driblets. It was delightful to listen to the high polite voice pronouncing sentences of death. And with the friend of the Lebbin couple, Herbert and Bucher (according to Keudell and Ross) had made him thoroughly disgusted. Holstein was different from Bismarck's view of him. Not a creative mind. Not the man to mould the fate of a nation. Not of one casting; in many a trait a problematic nature ("such natures," says Goethe, "one will rarely find described in dictionaries, libraries, necrologies, with thoroughness and fairness"). Exceptionally suspicious and sensitive: and yet at heart of a happy temperament. From tip to toe replete with political passion: and yet almost childishly pleased at the small everyday joys of existence. This very *joie de vivre* I had not

credited him with. Had expected to meet a sinister looking Alba *in duodecimo;* "a long-legged, small-bodied spider that does not get fat on his food, and spins very thin threads, which, however, are all the more tough." And found beneath white hair one still sprightly, who loved like Egmont sweet life, the beautiful, pleasant habit of being and doing. Quiet woods and gaily dotted meadows; walks under pines of the March, or on sandy commons beyond the last houses of the capital. Tasty food and a good drop. Converse with serious men, and dainty or clever women. Already in 1906 he was obliged to diet himself, only visited still at five houses (if he was certain not to meet any stranger), and the meal that was dished up to him in his narrow little dining-room was more frugal and more plainly served than that of a bank clerk. Still he took pleasure in many things. "Each spring the first fresh green of the Tiergarten; or when in Werder the cherry trees are in bloom; at Whitsun sweet flags and sprigs of birch; the old Moltke, the old Kaiser." Thus (approximately) could he say with Fontane. And the man of Schwedt, like he of Neuruppin, was almost entirely devoid of all sense of solemnity. "Potentates of all kinds and grades, from the court, from the bourse, from the parade, ladies with or without encumbrances, porters, stewards, house-owners: I could accommodate myself comfortably to all, but I was unable to treat them with solemnity." Holstein, however, was certainly not the man to accommodate himself comfortably. But a man whom the Gascon poet from the March would have loved. Not merely clever: but cultured as well. Not merely witty: but full of manly humour. How heartily he could laugh;

how one had to laugh, when he told a story against himself, or caricatured someone else! "Until he found a rich wife he toiled dreadfully, and got horny skin on his soul from it." "He has uttered so many lies that he now stinks from the mouth." And worse. Mendacity was his abomination. Of Paul Hatzfeldt (whom among all diplomats he loved best, and whose portrait he had always in front of him on his writing-table) he often declared: "He has never uttered an untrue word." And of this virtue he boasted himself; only this one. (Untruthfulness enforced by official duty came under the heading of a *reservatio jacobea;* many a man who thought himself on intimate terms with him, was treated by the retired statesman "as a foreign diplomat." The gallant side of his nature is revealed in Hatzfeldt's "Letters," and even in his old age it was noticeable how often he was in, and what pleasure he derived from, the company of ladies. He had probably always been more *ami des femmes* than *homme à femmes;* the boatman of the Ark, who took in and comforted those threatened by the flood. Gallant in the olden style; like a knight who bows to womanhood, but never descends to dancing attendance in the boudoir. With children, too, he could talk; merrily and seriously. The Holstein, as limned by Bismarck, could not have done that. Only he whose heart contains some kindness can do it. And the old bachelor was as great a favourite with the children, as with their mothers.

A *causeur*, such as can scarcely be found to-day in Northern Germany. He had seen much, had read many sound books, and selected his words like one educated in the school of Doudan and Schopenhauer. Whoever could resist such graceful arts, was bound

to be carried away by the man's patriotism. "The citizen's passionate love of fatherland springs from the sum of the passions that God has planted into man's heart: love of self and determination to defend the inborn holy right to a share of the sunlight; love of the family, the most concise fatherland which does not reach beyond the children's heart-beat. Father and mother, wife and child, blood and language, honour and patrimony, dignity and possessions, ocean and mountains, custom and law, heaven and earth: all these are embraced by the love of the fatherland. Of all noble passions it is the mightiest, because all others are contained within it, and only from it can humanity hope for superhuman performance." Never did I appreciate more fully the rhythm of these sentences of Lamartine than during the time of my intercourse with Holstein. He loved Prussia, loved the German Empire, as a mother and as a bride. Was ready to sacrifice everything for the Fatherland, which, however, rewarded him with niggard hand and surly mien. A life long in subordination; a salary, barely sufficient for even modest needs; inglorious labour, and day by day kennel-boy annoyances in the office. Master of the entire apparatus of Imperial diplomacy, an indefatigable worker, clear, white, and clean in every fold of his being, and never discontented in his proud poverty. Such a growth is a credit to the German soil. Other countries should try to imitate it in that. Holstein has found the consolation he longed for: with his human arm he turned or checked the wheel of the world's fate. But even as an obscure Privy Councillor he would have been bound hand and foot to the fatherland; in no circumstances a Gallic *fonctionnaire*, who, according to

Napoleon's description, nourishes vanity instead of pride within his breast, lies in wait for emoluments and extra profits, and loves the office better than the State. He gnashed his teeth if he was unable to prevent a mistake; experienced bodily pain if he read anything that to him seemed harmful to the Empire; and would have gladly condemned anyone, who boldly upheld foreign interests, to be drawn and quartered. His instinct for what was necessary to the Empire was not infallible like Bismarck's. When the latter, on his way to Reval, had spent the night drinking with the Prussian Consul in the wine cellars of the old town hall at Lübeck, and on the following morning, with a sore head, as though rocked in a watery cradle, gazed sleepily out to sea through the port-hole of his cabin, he saw at once that the right course was not being steered. With a giddy head he slipped into his clothes, climbed on deck, and said: "There is something wrong with your navigation, Captain." "How is that?" "Steering the course you do, you will never reach Reval." "Nor do I want to, sir, I'm for Hull." In a state of slight intoxication Bismarck had got aboard the wrong vessel in the dark; had, however, although at sea for the first time, and aching in every limb from the effects of the night's excess, noticed immediately, that the present course would not take him to his destination. Holstein occasionally noticed things too late; even in a state of sobriety, not intoxicated by any passion, and often in a perfectly translucent fairway. But the goal he considered remunerative, he always sought with a devout soul. How did he reach it? By any passable thoroughfare; or, circuitously, by stinking side streets. *Cum finis est licitus, etiam*

media sunt licita, he opined (though he certainly did not know Busenbaum and Pascal); the patriotic object sanctifies all means. To decry Otto Bismarck as an enemy of the Empire, to blacken Herbert Bismarck in the English press, to surround father and son with spies: what the fatherland demands, must be done. Neither did they ever spare anyone; and his letters from the province contain the happy news: "*Nous corrigeons le vice du moyen par la pureté de la fin.*" All politicians who wish to achieve anything have thought and acted thus, before and since Macchiavelli. "A bad deed only becomes a crime, when it has been proved, that it was not the outcome of necessity," was the dictum of Napoleon, when they tried to frighten him with the shadow of the Duc d'Enghien. And Fritz of Prussia was not more fastidious than Fritz von Holstein. "If it cannot be done otherwise, we must just become rogues," said the Great Frederick.

As a bride and as a mother Holstein loved the homeland. Rarely does the bridegroom, the son, know her thoroughly; sees her with loving eye frequently more beautiful, with an anxious eye often weaker than she really is; suspects not what capacities for defence and offence she carries within her. So it was in this case. "Of internal politics I know nothing." This was said by the Privy Councillor with quiet modesty. When I heard it for the first time, I thought: he exaggerates; he merely means to imply that on this subject he does not feel so confident as in the professional sphere of diplomacy. No; he really knew nothing about it. Nothing of government, laws, finances, interests of class, parties. He had only cared for the defensive forces, army and

navy, and regarded all the factions that did not grant the needful supplies as the Empire's enemies (and naturally included Poles, Guelphs, Danes, who to him were but outposts on German soil, and grudged them the least easement). After the dissolution of the Reichstag on the 13th of December 1906, he asked: "Now is this *volte-face* against the Centre a good or a bad idea of poor Bülow?" (He often called him that; considered the Chancellor's position a most uncomfortable one, and was ever sedulously anxious to guard him against too fierce an attack.) Is soon convinced that his friend, who is guided by no genius, will at best prove victorious, as did Pyrrhus in Apulia over the Romans; on Asculum must follow Beneventum, and Herr Erzberger, despite the triumphant songs of the Evangelical Union, will speedily stiffen into a Curius Dentatus. He has also no opinion on the possibility of an Imperial Finance Reform; only avowed himself in a stinging letter to the Chancellor as enemy of the Inheritance Tax. Of the development of German economics, their strength, efficiency, relation to other great States, scarcely a hazy notion had penetrated his consciousness. Specialist for Foreign Affairs. Probably the last of his kind; even his admirers must wish that. How can any one succeed lastingly in international matters, if he does not know down to the lowest root, how the edifice and the life of the body politic are constructed? Who does not see that in Great Britain, perhaps even to-morrow, the stormy longing for sufficient protection and outlet of produce may blow away the paper differences of party. That the troubles in Russia are not for freedom and human rights, but against reactionary communism? That

France, the old experimental country for the history of humanity, will not much longer be able to avoid deciding between Anarcho-Socialism and a dictatorship? That all policy in the Balkans must be determined, economically, from Vienna, Bucharest, Sofia and Constantinople? That the United States are preparing for the export of their industries and building men-o'-war to enforce sales in undefended markets. The times of Court and Chancellory diplomacy are irretrievably past. Bismarck, by the grace of genius, was all-comprehending. Holstein, who must not be called a bureaucrat, recognised too late how much stronger was the beloved Fatherland, than he had imagined.

Specialist. Even as such not creative in the proper meaning of the word. But quite uncommonly gifted in exploiting the mistakes of others, and coining strange ideas. Quick as lightning, he would then weigh every possibility, had a baker's dozen of historical instances at his fingers' tips, and with a breath from his eloquent lips he dispersed all doubt. When he heard last summer that King Edward, while in Ischl, had requested Francis Joseph to join the British concern and to ask the ally in Berlin for an understanding on the building of fleets, and had in reply to both requests received a friendly but firm negative, his old heart beat fast for joy. Now everything, everything would be changed. The old Emperor had said: "There I have made an enemy for myself; but I could not do otherwise." Edward left in annoyance, and had a quarrel with Clemenceau, not at all favourable to the just completed cure. "If we do not now become soft again, the isolation misses its object." Day and night he pondered how he

might encourage here, how smooth over difficulties there. And had completed his plan in the rough, when the Bosnian trouble commenced. Subsequently he warmly praised the Chancellor's detail work. "He really had a few pretty ideas, and I do not know, who could have done it better to-day." He saw the skies almost open. Only: the fleet! That was the bitterest care of the last years of his life. So long as we continue to build at the pace favoured at present, there will be no advance in international politics, nor in matters financial. We need only submarines, mines, small cruisers, torpedo boats, destroyers; technical armament and coast defence. We must come to an understanding with England. With a great Power's dignified calm, of course; and must not wait until the matter is brought up before The Hague Conference, where we shall have a majority overwhelming us, or at any rate be placed in the wrong. (What would he have said if the echo of the Press Conference could still have reached his ear? Balfour and Asquith, Roberts and Haldane, Lansdowne and Grey: high time for a proud resolve. If he had heard that Austria and Italy had also now been forced into rapidly building costly Dreadnoughts? "The best way to make them disgusted with the Triple Alliance. Another flirtation with the Russians, whose feelings Lamsdorff, Cassini, Iswolskij, have revealed to us anyhow, and finally even a promise for Persia, and we are back to where we were after Algeciras.") Whoever mentioned the Navy League within his hearing, was sent home to the tune of an angrily resounding march. The Navy Secretary, Tirpitz, was to him a Jonah of mischief. Behind any agitation for battleships in the press or

in Parliament he immediately scented manufacturers of armour-plate, shareholders in shipbuilding-yards, and other hunters for profit. That was characteristic of him. Credited any one, who thought otherwise, with being capable of the basest actions. Up to the point of treason, and even beyond. Every article that displeased him was the work of malicious wights, who in most cases had sent the writer only on in advance, and awaited the effect behind their paper rampart. Whatever was launched against him in the papers, originated invariably with Hammann. He controlled the wood-pulp paper of the entire globe. *Hic et ubique.* Even though all indications were against it. Holstein was not to be convinced. And yet he never learnt to comprehend, how any one could be so infamous as to credit *him* with ugly motives.

"Certain minds must be left in possession of their idiotisms," says Mrs Councillor's merrily ingenious son. The smoke from the Black Kitchen does not cling merely to the clothes. Even Bismarck's majestic human intellect was accessible to such forcible representations. His name for the pernicious despoiler was Liar Holstein (sometimes also Boetticher); to the Privy Councillor in all parts of the Empire the name was Hammann.

Everything in life only repeats itself; often it was not easy for me to keep a straight face, when listening to these repetitions; to hear patiently on the mouth organ the tune that the cathedral organ has roared into your ear. For the humour of the matter, Holstein had no appreciation. Got himself out of the dilemma with a pointed joke: "You have a very pleasant way of hinting that I am at least half mad. All right. My spinach is getting cold anyhow, if I don't hurry. But

that you make me out obstinate, is too bad; in comparison with you I am a tractable schoolgirl. Never mind, some day you will retract all your insults and will see, that I still have my five senses about me. Do you really believe, that the practice of reviling Herr Harden would have assumed such proportions without the blessing of the press bureau? Nine-tenths of them are people, whom Hammann simply summons and teaches *mores*, if something does not please him." His fury had evaporated, and he could laugh again. The next day was always certain to bring a letter. "You surely do not think that I want to egg you on? That would indeed be "Love's Labour's Lost." I have from time to time been able actually to convince my chiefs; in your case it would be useless. Moreover, I should not like you to waste your time on such a wild-goose chase. You have added to your enemies mine; and in addition to my own, I have got yours. I can stand it, and for you I have no fear. But . . ." *Ceterum censeo.* Nevertheless I do not think that he would have rejoiced to see the hated press director arraigned before a jury, accused of perjury (in a cause, consecrated in a sultry hour by the erotics). Although he but rarely hearkened to pity's gentle voice.

He certainly had reason for furious complaint. Long since out of office, without the irreplaceable access to documents, with his active mind condemned to idle inaction; and yet, like Aunt Sally's head in the cocoanut booth, for every loafer to shy at. "The blame for everything lies with Herr von Holstein. Wants war with France. Will not let us come to an understanding with England. Has vindictively frightened away the peaceful philosopher, Tschirschky.

Plotted the campaign against Eulenburg and his colleagues. Is still the motive force behind everything. Works secretly for half days at a time in the Wilhelmstrasse. Bombards the Chancellor with letters, and twice this month Bülow visited him." The richest *canards* were started by the newspapers, whose editors had craved for his contributions with a beggar's persistent devotion, and instead of the desired " revelations," had received unequivocal refusals (perhaps the letters may yet be published). This he bore quietly, and with an even lighter heart, what Germany's enemies said against him ; he would have thought ill of himself, had he been praised by Tardieu and similar small minds. Once only could I induce him to repudiate the worst of misrepresentations ; he dictated to the clever representative of the 'Matin' his *credo*, and was glad indeed of the effect. He felt far more hurt at being regarded in England as a bad sort ; in Berlin he had been abused for his Anglophil tendencies, and had persevered undismayed with the irksome attempt to eradicate all Anglo-German discord. Eulenburg? Here again he was without fault or guilt. The Fürst he despised, had called him " contemptible," man to man, and openly declared everywhere, that he considered the removal of this detrimental as the best service that could be rendered the Empire and the Emperor. But of course the fight had long (since 1893) commenced, when Holstein got to know me ; he could tell me nothing new, had not the tiniest proof, and only saw my documentary material, when after the Munich suit, in my capacity as witness, I was obliged to submit it to the examining judge. Not even the name Lecomte did he mention to me, (although this would have meant fulfiling the wish of

one, who was of importance to him); and when I pronounced it, he turned pale: for he knew that now no further pardon would be given. During the worst time he remained by my side like an elderly friend. But in the strategy and tactics of the fight he had no more a hand, than any man in the street. Many papers reported it differently. I was indeed the tool of his revenge. "This is to set you against me," he said. "They hope that with your dangerous temperament you will defend yourself against the suspicion on your independence and break away from me. Then they will fall upon me. You, dear friend, must do what you consider the tactically correct thing. Their yells do not trouble me. I am only sorry that I am unable to help you. My skin itches every time I am pilloried as the alleged friend of the Phili of Munich and Vienna. As your partisan: three times a day, for all I care. If, however, one fights, as you do, single-handed against unnameable forces, which have resisted four Imperial Chancellors, it is not pleasant to have colleagues falsely imputed to one's self." The lie, that Holstein had furnished me with the weapons and had revealed official secrets, had actually reached the Emperor's ear. The staunch monarchist, who had never deserted his Emperor, not even during the March storm of 1890, and had only desired narrower boundaries to the Imperial activities, was looked upon as a traitor. As dead, silently coffined, ingloriously interred. Before he died.

The events of this year of litigation had broken the septuagenarian's strength. "You will recover; I shall not." Amidst agonies he lost the faith that for so long had been firm as a rock, the belief in legal justice, in the manly courage of high and highest

officers of State, the honest nobility of his conservative party; in the darkest hours, almost even the faith in Old Prussia. "Has the South really better justice? Then we must be ashamed of ourselves." He became embittered, asked, what he had fought for during forty long years, became decrepit and aggressive. In the legs he felt it first. Varicose veins, all kinds of painful symptoms, which threatened senile decay. Extended walks had to be avoided. To lie or sit in his room, to apply poultices, to wrap a rug round his legs; even a tram-ride involved subsequent suffering. Only half a life. Next the stomach became rebellious. Retained only gruel and the lightest of food. Brought up blood. Ulcers? The body grew lean, the hands shrank and became wrinkled. This looked like cancer of the stomach. Dr Grünfeld, his faithful physician, comforted him: such gastric bleedings were not rare in elderly people with calcined veins, and not seriously dangerous. Holstein was fond of life; and therefore was willing to hope. Talks on the business of the State were during his confinement to the sick-bed almost his only joy. And the press chronicled with great accuracy, how often the Chancellor visited the patient. Were the intervals too short: "Holstein is again managing everything." The power of mind over the body was proved to the old gentleman's friends during the Oriental crisis. He was livelier than ever, even when he was not allowed out into the open air. At length he again had work to do, and could give expert advice. Not only by means of unprejudiced letters to ambassadors and political agents, who partly from motives of politeness, had kept him informed on many matters. Now he was being asked, and had to answer. And the very matter he advised on turned out well.

In the glow of the setting sun he seemed to revive. The Emperor had recognised the signs of the times and the hope, to be able to cow the German Empire, had vanished. A year of a double harvest. Even the last bluff of Iswolskij faded into thin air; Russia gives in. Just so long his vitality had lasted out. Now the heart-beat grows weaker, cough and shortness of breath worse; he has to be kept going with stimulants. In his narrow bed he appeared fleshless. And lay patiently, took the potion, the gruel, and talked of the vital possibilities of the Fatherland. When the Chancellor after a long interval (there was probably much to attend to at the office and in the Reichstag) was again announced, for the day previous to his departure for Venice, the sick man, after a severe attack, had camphor injected, and then talked for probably an hour to his attentive friend, who had become his supreme chief. "It was something in the nature of my political testament. When the most necessary had been said, I concluded: 'Now I have finished. But I believe: I have finished for ever.'"

Even his last egg he laid into a strange nest.

"When the vanquished hero's fame
Is not sung to all our folk,
I will Hector's deeds proclaim
(Thus the son of Tydeus spoke).
Guarding hearth and home he fell,
Sank beneath the victor's blows,
Held in honour—e'en his foes
Still of Hector's prowess tell."

. . . A patriot, who must not be forgotten at the festival of victory, nor on the day of deepest mourning. "Human beings," Goethe sighs, "do not understand each other easily, even with the best of intentions; to

which must be added bad intent, that distorts everything." This one was not understood. He possessed more kindness, more regard for human worth than the best-disposed onlookers credited him with. The sum of his faults was not small. And the sense of truthfulness, which he so frequently extolled as the most noble quality, would be grossly violated if, in a craven spirit, one were to attempt to minimise the total. The faults of one, whose life was destined to penetrate the realms of tragedy. Of one who was never permitted to decide for himself, according to his ideas of meaning and intent; who had always first to convince some one else (frequently enough of smaller intellect and experience), who had to choose between his master and his Emperor, and who was crushed by this destiny, since it eventually raised him on to a small pinnacle. Who never knew the burden, the joy of full responsibility, and therefore occasionally rashly risked more, than a visible worker, who can be called to account. A sensitive knight-errant, who in the fray would lose his nerve. Who even chided his previously neglected superior for having left him defenceless in the turmoil. An Old-Prussian royalist, to whom the master's standard was his palladium, who was unwillingly estranged from his King towards the end of his life, but who tried to smile and even to laugh across the grave of holy love. A keen, brave, unselfish, diligent man, who would not accept anything from anybody; the gifts which he lavishly dispensed among the poor, he saved by denying himself; never expanded in pride, modestly appreciated any achievement in any other sphere, and was keen on cleanliness; and who seemed to be bursting with fury, if anyone sniffed at him with nostrils reeking of filth; he who

during decades had worked in the Black Kitchen. In many traits resembling a problematic nature: never fully equal to any emergency, and never quite satisfied. A superior he will not, a subordinate he cannot be. In a heating light the burn on the skinless spot on the chest would become unbearable. The subaltern, from lack of docile subservience, soon becomes burdensome to every chief. Fritz von Holstein has been reviled because in slack times of peace he ventured to recall the last recourse of nations, of princes; because to him, as to his favourite, Schiller, the nation appeared despicable, that did not cheerfully risk everything for their honour. He believed in Germany, and when he, for the first and last time, inaccessible to the human eye, led under fire, he proved victorious in this pious belief. Clear sounded from the old man's throat the call throughout the land.

Is it not perhaps best for him that he died after this day of sunshine? Did not again see the new winter? He would again have become the lurking bird of prey to all evil intention. And the Indian summer fruit of his brain, as was so often the case with the spring fruit, would have been ripened by the sun of a stranger's mind.

WALDERSEE

Alfred Count von Waldersee, Prussian General (*born* April 8, 1832, in Potsdam ; *died* March 5, 1904, in Hanover). Married the widow of the Fürst von Noer, an aunt of the German Empress.

WALDERSEE

"General Field-Marshal Count von Waldersee, the all-revered, famous Commander-in-Chief of the allied troops in Eastern Asia during the years 1900 and 1901, has ended his life's career. With deep emotion this sorrowful news will be heard by Austrians and Italians, Japanese and Americans, French, and more especially by all those Germans who, in those memorable days, enthusiastically followed his lead. Up to within a few days still in full possession of enviable bodily and mental vigour, he died painlessly after a short illness on the fifth of March at Hanover, having nearly completed his seventy-second year. The pride and the hope of the Army, proved alike in war and in peace, in deed and council, a thorough man and a sincere Christian in life as in dying, he has led a happy life, over-rich in successes and now—in fulfilment of his wish to die in harness—has met with a swift, harmonious end. But in our memory he will continue to live as the model of a true soldier, faithful to his King, a great leader of armies, a noble-minded superior, and a faithful, always humanly sympathetic, comrade." This necrology was penned, "in the name of the officers and officials attached to the

Commander-in-Chief of the Army in Eastern Asia" by General-Major Baron von Gayl, who was in Petchili Waldersee's chief-of-staff. A man under personal obligations; grateful remembrance of past benefits easily tints reality to the eye. Nearly every word of the obituary notice is disproved by indisputable facts. Alfred Count von Waldersee was not "all-revered," was not "famous" as the Commander-in-Chief of the allied contingents against China; rather the butt of countless jokes. He was not allowed to lead the troops into action: therefore they could not "enthusiastically follow his lead." Since his return he was ailing; for decades past he had been suffering from some disease of the veins, and would no longer have stood the strain of a campaign. He may have been the "pride" of some in the army; but to none was he any longer a "hope." Never did he find the opportunity to "prove" himself in war. His life was in successes, which he strove for seriously, not "over-rich," but as poor as a beggar. Not a single wish of his of any importance had been fulfilled; not even the one: to prove himself a "great leader of armies." He was not a fortunate man, but a disappointed, embittered one, who even in his brightest hours had to content himself with a semblance of power. And he did not die "in harness," but in a *sinecure* post, of an eminence, which as a rule only Princes can scale. Nevertheless, nearly all the necrologies sent after him were of much the same shade of colouring, as the one Baron von Gayl had caused to be published. Even in democratic journals you could read, that Count Waldersee had secured for all times a place of honour in the History of the German Army. And the Emperor wrote, that the "army had looked up to him with unqualified con-

fidence as to the chosen leader in the serious times of war." Curious. When Waldersee, after an activity of not even three years, had to give up the leadership of the Great General Staff and was made General in Command of the Ninth Army Corps, the Emperor wrote to him, that in the event of war, he had him in view as the leader of an army; of *an* army, not of *the* entire German hosts. Being then fifty-eight, he felt this as a *capitis diminutio;* he did not want to lie quietly on the chain of the Hohenzollern Family Order, in Altona; asked for his discharge, and could so little conceal his anger when by the War-Lord's command he was obliged to remain in the service, that in bidding farewell to the officers of the General Staff, he said: "His Majesty has placed me in another position; it is not seemly for a soldier to enquire into the reason." Why, we may ask to-day, was this "chosen leader, to whom the army looked up with unqualified confidence," forced to climb down from the top of the ladder of honour? Why did he not remain Chief of the General Staff for ten years longer, why not to the end of his life? For this position the best man ought surely to be just good enough. We must assume that Waldersee's strategic genius was not valued so highly in 1891 as in 1904. Goethe has called Death a very indifferent portrait-painter; he did not like the exhibitions of corpses in gala, the "parades in death," and would smile, could he see, how sanctified biers have again come into fashion with his countrymen. In heathen days, so long as the body enveloped in cloths or placed in a shell made of the bark of a tree, and without a rigid case, was laid to its last rest in the lap of fruitful, her own fruit ravenously devouring, Mother Earth, the top board protected the cold body against the falling

clods. And when the Christian faith, brought from the East, with other Oriental habits, the custom of building a wooden house after the pattern of the sarcophagus, the Germanic tribes, face to face with an impending change, submitted, as in many other cases, to a compromise: the top board, on which the dead had first been placed, still remained hallowed, but now, being no longer used as a protection against the clods, it was decorated with paintings and inscriptions and exposed to view on the more frequented roads, to remind the wanderers of the dead, and make the divinity favourably disposed towards the escaped souls. In many a district the old custom still survives; in the South of Germany and in certain cantons of Switzerland one can still see boards of biers. Their object is no longer to propitiate the gods in favour of the departed's soul, but to proclaim to coming generations the deeds of their beloved dead. Then, of course, frequently much the same happens, as in the necrologies of the time of the Emperors, which elicited from Cicero the remark: *Multa eis scripta sunt, quæ facta non sunt.* And since, with the change of fashion, the press has taken over, together with other duties of the clergy of old, the office of necrologist, scarcely anything is left of the reserved dignity of seriously meant and seriously felt mourning. As once wooden boards protected the body, so wood-pulp paper has now to serve as a protection against defiling clods for the mental image of the dead. But earth slides downwards, and makes holes in the veneer, in the cellulose fame. When it gets to that stage, nobody cares any longer about the necrology, only about the achievement. Waldersee a great General? May be; only it was not vouchsafed him to prove his

genius. And it is almost comical to be constantly hearing it said of some man, who never cut a piece of cloth, that he was well known among the living to make the best dress coat.

Alfred Waldersee carefully looked after his fame; too carefully. His marriage with the widow of a Prince of Holstein-Augustenburg was a clever move. He thereby increased the influence of his house, became financially independent, and lived to experience the happiness of being able to greet an Empress as the niece of his wife. The second success of his life's tactics was, that the ageing Field-Marshal Moltke, who seldom allowed any one very near him, liked to see him, and selected him for the post of Quartermaster-General, the successor to his throne. Waldersee's destiny, however, was and remained: that he could not wait, and over and over again attempted to warm his budding wishes at the lamplight, to bring them all the speedier to a ripe consummation. He has climbed many a steep height, but never could keep his footing on top. *He* was to be talked of, only *he* was to be looked at; and he himself did not heed Jacob's advice about curbing the tongue. It was easy to understand that the capable soldier found the slack times of peace hanging heavily on his hands, that Moltke's successor, as yet untested on the field of battle, longed for a war, in which he could prove that he was not unworthy of the great inheritance. But the cunning one had to preserve a proper perspective, and must not imagine that a smart ride with lances, against Bismarck's will, would force the chance of war. Ambition dazzled him. The old times were gradually coming to an end. Each new morning might

bring the news of the Emperor's death; the Crown Prince was incurably diseased; according to human forecast, Prince Wilhelm, the husband of another Augustenburg princess, was soon bound to ascend the throne. The struggle for the new Emperor's favours commenced, even before the sceptre had dropped from the hand of the old one. It is a pity, that of the secret history of these troubled days, not everything can as yet be submitted to public criticism. It seemed that the most important task would be to sever the future Emperor from the first Chancellor; and in the earliest stages of this campaign Count Waldersee proved himself a capable strategist. Prince Wilhelm was looked upon as an ardent soldier; as a young gentleman, who would not hesitate long, boldly to reach for the victor's wreath, with which the National Anthem wishes to see the ruler adorned; was also regarded as a strict Lutheran and admirer of the Court Chaplain Stoecker, whose moral and intellectual magnitude he actually extolled in the presence of some daughters of Abraham. Waldersee wanted to cook on both fires. Already as Quartermaster-General he was, and so was the more pious wife, a supporter of Stoecker's Berlin Town Mission, for which, in the presence of Prince and Princess Wilhelm, he made propaganda. Later, when he became Chief of the General Staff, he had diplomatic reports sent him from Paris and Petersburg, behind the Chancellor's back; as Bismarck has often contended: to discredit the quiet policy of the Fürst with the Emperor. The game was dangerous, but the stake so big, that it had to be risked. The "funeral-pile letter," which Herr Stoecker wrote to Baron Wilhelm von Hammerstein, the autocrat of the

'Kreuzzeitung,' has made us appreciate how much *finesse* was at work at the time. The Court Chaplain realised that William the Second still clung to the Chancellor, and that a pitched battle was bound to end in the defeat of the aggressors; therefore he wrote: "Should the Kaiser spot it, that there exists an intent to sow discord between him and Bismarck, he will feel hurt and repelled. If in matters, where he is instinctively on our side, his discontentedness is fed, he will be unconsciously strengthened in his principles, without being personally irritated. He has recently said: 'Six months I shall give the old one (Bismarck) to recover his breath; after that I, myself, shall reign.' Bismarck himself was of opinion that he would not be able long to keep the Emperor in hand. We must therefore still be cautious, without giving ourselves away." We: this meant the triumvirate, Waldersee-Stoecker-Hammerstein. When subsequently Stoecker alone was left over, well might he sigh: We were not cautious enough. If the recipe given by the pastoral *materia medica* had been followed, the triple union would, probably, have been longer and more enduringly effective. Waldersee could not overcome his vainglory, nor Hammerstein his party bias. The whole pack was let loose, and yelped at the troublesome giant. Bismarck is a weak believer in Ritschli, a lukewarm Laodicean, and ogles with the liberal enemies of the true faith. He makes a mistake in dealing with Social Democracy, which can only be vanquished through Christian Socialism. He is tired, shuns the exertion and responsibility of a war, and neglects the most opportune hour for the inevitable campaign against Russia. In internal politics his universal remedy is the "Kartell," the

continued existence of which is threatened by Christianity, monarchic and conservative interests. As a diplomat he overrates the value of our alliances, and forgets that Germany alone is strong enough to hold her own against any coalition. Something in that strain could be read every day. At the same time one learnt, that the Emperor saw Count Waldersee every day, that he walked with him in the Tiergarten, and that he was taking him, and not some representative of the Foreign Office, on his trip to the North Cape. The art of silence Moltke's Chief of the General Staff had not inherited. He was the herald of his deeds, and talked of every little success with thoughtless haste. When the Kaiser called for him and drove with him to the Wilhelmstrasse to congratulate the Chancellor on the latter's birthday, it was a certainty with him, and with his talkativeness, very soon with his friends too, that he had been selected as Bismarck's successor.

It was very indiscreet to say so. The Chief of the General Staff had unmasked his batteries all too soon. Still, he always sturdily denied ever having dabbled in politics: "I serve his Majesty as a soldier, and am not a party man." Nevertheless, he was known to have inspired the anti-Russian articles which appeared in the 'Militärwochenblatt' and the 'Kreuzzeitung,' and to be the protector of Stoecker. And now the man in the Sachsenwald fell back for the annihilating blow. He caused complaints to be made about "political-military undercurrents," which impeded the honest peacebroker in the pursuit of his business; rumours to be circulated about a memorial, presented to the Emperor, urging a preventive war against Russia; the view to be promul-

gated, referring to the 'Theory of War,' by Clausewitz, that the strategist should be no more than the assistant, trained in military technics, of the Statesman responsible to the people and the King, for whom the final decision on vital questions for the nation must always be reserved; and, as plainly as circumstances allowed, Waldersee to be indicated as the mischief-maker. The effect of this blow was not immediately visible. In the Reichstag, in reply to a question by Deputy Richter, as to whether the Chief of the General Staff was attempting to thwart the Chancellor's policy, up jumped Herr von Verdy, the Minister of War,—whom Bismarck had looked upon as his enemy,—and declared any suspicion of that kind to be frivolous. "It is insulting to the army, merely to suspect, that there could exist among us a spirit which in any way could be in opposition to his Majesty's Government." The words were carefully chosen; there were then already some, who were of opinion, that Bismarck was merely allowed to "recover his breath," and that he no longer belonged to "his Majesty's Government." Only later did one appreciate the stylistic *finesse* of this angry retort. Long, of course, have we known that Waldersee at that time actually did pursue a policy opposed to the official one, and that on the quiet he was mobilising his people against Bismarck; if he did not want to be anything more than the King's most obedient soldier, he surely need not have lent the *roué* Hammerstein, the editor, a sum of £5000 *à fonds perdu*, nor to have presented different amounts to Normann-Schumann, the many-sided journalist. In November 1889 the Secretary of State, Count Herbert Bismarck, could only endorse "from the bottom of his heart" this

declaration of the Minister of War. This sounded curious; and the younger Bismarck went straight to Berlin, shook his clear head, and said: "If you cannot get the man under, it would have been better to have left him unmolested." The father, nevertheless, had seen further than the son. His strokes decapitated all Waldersee's hopes. Suspected of being a pietist, and of agitating for a double-frontier war, he could not become Chancellor. The Uhlan felt the weight of these blows; in October 1894 he wrote: "It suited Fürst Bismarck well to make me appear a hypocrite, a supporter of Stoecker, a black reactionary, an instigator of war, &c., &c., so that the average philistine felt a shudder, whenever my name was mentioned. Herr von Caprivi was pleased to blow on the same horn, and under his *régime* my reputation has not improved." Those were his words five days after the appointment of the third Chancellor. That he would yet some day move into the old Palais Radziwill, he himself no longer dared to believe. He wanted to go to Strassburg, as "Statthalter," and "it suited his book well" to pose as a National Liberal and a convinced export politician. Prejudices he had none. In 1888 he staked on Stoecker's card, and was hyper-conservative of the black canonical shade; in 1904 he sat with the theatre director Lindau at the dinner-table of Privy Councillor Goldberger, whom he asked for introductions to American capitalists. In 1889 he said: "Your Majesty's illustrious ancestor would never have become 'Frederick the Great' to his people, had he tolerated an omnipotent Minister by his side"; in 1891, at Friedrichsruh, he bemoans the personal Government, that leaves no scope to a statesman

with a deep-rooted feeling of responsibility. In 1900, in a telegram to his close friend, Herr Giese, Senior Burgomaster of Altona, he refers to himself as "Commander-in-Chief *in partibus infidelium*," thus likening himself to the titular bishops, who in non-Catholic countries are without a see, and without diocesan activity; soon after, on his way to China, he made a triumphant passage through Germany, and behaved as if the weal or the woe of the Empire depended on his operations.

He could not keep his tongue under control. Not even, though trained to courtly usage, when in Silesia he had to criticise the Emperor's manœuvre tactics. His nerves were still vibrating with fury at seeing Caprivi, whom he used to call derisively the genial sergeant-major, preferred to himself; the pious Uhlan forgot that the Emperor had ceased to be his pupil, and in full view of the assembled warriors a painful scene ensued. The Chief of the General Staff found his authority impaired in the presence of the young officers; he wanted to leave, but was induced, with an ironical smile, to continue at his post. Soon after, he was quartered in Altona, where he was to gather fresh experience in the practical handling of troops. With him there departed from the Great General Staff his aide-de-camp, Major Jahn, and his confidential man, Major Liebert. "Changes of officials in the interests of the service." Too often it had been whispered, that the husband of the widowed Princess of Holstein was the only person who had any influence on the Emperor. "Curb the tongue, ye saints," admonishes Jakobus. Waldersee, Verdy, Stoecker: all fell. And it was surely but a poor consolation that, before them, Bismarck had fallen.

Count Alfred now became his neighbour—his neighbour and watchman. General von Leszczynski had done the retired statesman too much honour and in consequence, his merits notwithstanding, had got himself disliked. The new commander was more cautious. Occasionally he visited the Sachsenwald, but he always caused it to be announced from Switzerland by his journalistic minions, that he had no personal relations with Fürst Bismarck, and kept strictly to the Berlin orders. This was made easy for him; for the Fürst did not like him, did not even think much of his intelligence, and probably never exchanged an intimate word with him. "On those occasions I always have a feeling as though he wished—or had been told—to ascertain, whether it were about time to order an appropriate wreath. During my official career I was accustomed, if need be, to tell shooting and ballroom stories of the most insipid kind; besides which, questions on army matters and common acquaintances from Hamburg prevented conversation from flagging." Both were averse to a two years' military service, and both associated with much the same Hanseatic patricians. Waldersee soon adapted himself to his new surroundings. No further trace of Old-Prussian orthodoxy: a man of the day, who looks upon commerce with benevolent understanding. And no trace at all of animosity against Bismarck. "So long as the Fürst is living," he used to say, "there will always be two Chancellors; and the second is not to be envied." He moved most adroitly, gave no offence anywhere, was as great a favourite with the Senators as with his corps; but even there he still talked too much. Every few months I was told of the indiscreet matters the General had blabbed again;

the most secret concerns. There arrived, too, anonymous letters, in mirrored writing, with the postmark Altona; malice, small and great, against Caprivi, Hohenlohe, Bronsart, and . . .

In Goethe's animal epic the hero speaks thus:

"Once more have I succeeded
Slily to force my way higher, into his Majesty's good will.
As in the days that are gone, again shall I sit in the Council,
Useful to all our race. He has loudly proclaimed me his Empire's
Chancellor, and once again committed the seal to my keeping."

In spite of all endeavour, Alfred Waldersee, who had the face of a fox, never attained so high as that; but neither did he come to the ignominious end, that the wolf and his clan wished Mr Reynard. "Anointed all over," he crept back gently into the highest favour. *Canto the twelfth:* "Reynard bowed low to the King, made special obeisance before the Queen, and with courageous leaps he now again bounded into the circle." The Black Eagle, "General Oberst," General Field-Marshal, the Order *Pour le mérite*, General Inspector. The man, who never led an army into a serious engagement, was buried in 1904 under a March moon with honours, as though he had been the world's most famous general. Laurels and wood-pulp . . .

"Highly esteemed now is Reynard the Fox. So to wisdom convert him
Everyone, and avoid all that's bad, and just worship Dame Virtue!"

STOECKER

Adolf Stoecker, churchman and politician (*born* December 11, 1835, in Halberstadt; *died* February 8, 1909, in Gries, near Bozen). He retired from the Reichstag in 1908.

STOECKER

In the spring of 1875 the ranks of the devout, who sought holiday edification in the old cathedral on the river Spree, were sorely agitated by a disturbing phenomenon. They were accustomed to a solemn chancel eloquence, to the strict pomp and the ponderous dignity of an artistic theologian's pathos, with the swinging organ note of which no profane sound was allowed shrilly to intermingle; they had, once the padded doors were closed, forgotten the noise and the bustle of everyday life, and to the end of the service lived only in the pure realm that is not of this world. Now there resounded a strange tune; with a rough grip the barrier was removed that for so long had separated the solemn atmosphere of God's Annunciation from common actuality. The new Court preacher, whose undersized figure seemed tenser and taller in his canonicals, spoke not only of holy scripture, of the beatitude of Paradise and the proper help of God: he spoke also of the joys and sorrows of daily life, the small ones and the smallest, spoke of them as a tried man, who himself had experienced and suffered them, with a popular vigour and insistence that speedily and surely found its way

into narrow intellects. Wichern and Ahlfeld seemed to have come to life again in the Court Church; but a peculiar charm also emanated from the speaker: the force of a powerful temperament. When this expressive head, unfortunately not lit up amiably by a good eye, quivered in strong emotion, the shafts of lightning struck instantaneously among the masses of hearers, and a fervent fanaticism burst forth, that one imagined oneself no longer in the sober capital, but among the Frankish crusaders, who were once kindled to heroic deeds of salvation by the cry: God wills it! And a crusade the new Court preacher really seemed to be planning, a crusade against the sinful capital, which his flaming gaze probably saw as the Babylonian woman in the Revelation of St John. Herr Christian Adolf Stoecker was no world-estranged servant of the gospel; he was acquainted with a considerable portion of Europe, had travelled in Switzerland and Italy, had roamed through the north and the south of Germany, had been private tutor in Courland, and soldiers' chaplain in Metz when, at the age of thirty-nine, he was called to Berlin as Court preacher. He may have pictured the capital of the new Empire differently from what he found it, and the contrast of the ideal and the real that awakens the poets, may have roused the agitator from out of the complacency of the clergyman. It was the period of the great crash. A black swarm of bank thieves covered the distance far and wide, the surviving speculators had the fear of God in their quaking limbs, and the general tone, as the Stock Exchange reports always so prettily put it, was as miserable as a sick cat. But the capitalists' morality, that has adapted Darwin to a convenient

bankers' esperanto, merrily continued to thrive, free trade and industrial liberty seemed the last words in the wisdom of political economy, and the gold standard was intended silently to smooth the paths for the international sleigh parties of liquid capital. In politics Herr Bamberger set the key, in literature Herr Lindau, and the Press gently followed the trail of the 'Exchange Gazette.' Every man of culture who thought anything of himself was a proud materialist, jeered at priests and hypocrites, let God go his own way, and feared neither hell nor the devil. Reverence, which Goethe extols as the ultimate aim of all moral education, had long since been lost to this people of traders, or still only did homage to the glittering possession of ready cash, without troubling too anxiously about its origin, and it was almost regarded as a sign of a retrograde disposition to feel German, or to be actually religious. Into this new Berlin, the most public life of which, before even a lustre had elapsed since the foundation of the German Empire, had become almost absolutely degermanised, came Stoecker. Is it surprising that it did not please him, that he began to hate it with the burning wrath of a Protestant and Prussian Jeremiah? And since he saw the evil spirit particularly frequently embodied in people with very black hair and very hooked noses: is it surprising that these people seemed to him especially dangerous? He did not appreciate that in the oldest trading people the typical marks of the middleman's spirit must show themselves sooner and more markedly, than in a people whose conscience was strengthened by residence on and proprietorship of the land, and by warlike and feudal habits, and he did not foresee

that in the near future the difference between Jewish and Christian capitalists would be scarcely perceptible. All misfortune seemed to emanate from the Jews: the floodlike influence of the Jews must be hemmed in by dyke and dam. War without mercy. The new Court Chaplain turned anti-Semite.

This was a sign of short-sightedness, but surely also a proof of pluck. For the liberal press, the only one then powerful, had seen in time that the spirit that was being fought under the name of Judaism, was the spirit of the liberalism of the second epoch, of that liberalism which no longer fought for political freedom and people's rights, but for Saint Manchester and the glories of the traders' paradise, and they therefore armed themselves rapidly, even where led by Arian Christians, against the hotly onward pressing enemy. The press had long since become a capitalists' enterprise, a political newspaper was the pretext for a profitable advertisement business, and it could not be expected that great capitalists, who in the struggle for a bourgeois existence are almost always more cunning than their adversaries, would, in a war, the aim and end of which was the spirit of mammon, neutralise their armies of scribes. Who openly professes himself an anti-Semite would have had to (and must still to-day) be prepared to be declared an outlaw; his merits may be ever so great, or he ever so eminent in his branch—he is outlawed, is counted as among the scum of humanity; Lagarde and Dühring, Treitschke and Wagner can tell a tale about it. One would have thought that the war against Semitism, if carried on from conviction, would as such be no more despicable than the war against Catholicism, Capitalism, Squirearchy,

and Socialism; but the liberal press will have none of such lack of prejudice, it flings everyone, who rises against Israel, into a pit of monstrous sinners, and in its foolishness is still ready to exult, when the conduct of this war falls more and more into the hands of unclean persons, who have nothing to lose, and whom no ban therefore can do any harm. Such tactics may be termed foolish; it is conceivable that righteous and cleanly Jews, whose number is by no means small, will be passionately up in arms against such collective hatred, which a beloved fatherland wants to dispute; but one does them a poor service if this hatred, instead of proving it unfounded and short-sighted, is branded from the very start with the mark of shame, like the most miserable wickedness. Why should the question not be discussed quietly like other social manifestations? Such tactics led to the triumphs of Herr Ahlwardt, and to the deification of the powerful Lueger; they probably drove Stoecker further than he had really intended. At first he had fought only the excrescences of the Jewish spirit to a fairly quiet tune. The great game-drive that was commenced against him lashed him more and more into wilder fury: he became unjust, forgot the impetus that the people of the Book had given to mankind, and did not reflect that he borrowed his strongest weapons from the Jew Lassalle, and from Stahl, who, up to his eighteenth year had also been a Jew. He became unjust—and, surely, he was, and remained, a preacher who before all others should be just and truthful. That was his first mistake; and into this vulnerable spot the fury of the aggrieved plunged their dagger relentlessly.

From reading the newspapers one might be led to believe that Stoecker had been nothing but a cruel Jew-baiter all his life, and an insignificant pothouse demagogue. That is a mischievous misrepresentation, one of hundreds of misrepresentations that persecuted this singularly gifted man during two decades, and drove him to more and more unscrupulous modes of fighting. Stoecker made the Evangelical-Social movement possible: that is his imperishable achievement, and this achievement remains great and of historical importance, although the Christian-Social idea did not originate in the brain of the Berlin Court Chaplain. It was a Catholic idea. Bossuet, not merely an admirer, writhing in humility, of the *roi soleil*, but a man of strong social sentiment, had lent it eloquent words in his sermons, Saint-Simon had pleaded loudly with the Pope for help and protection for the poor, La Mennais, the impetuous Breton, had dreamed of a democratic-social catholicism, and since that time, from Lacordaire and Veuillot down to M. de Mun, attempts to win Rome's mighty power for a Christian-Social reform had never been lacking. Catholic science, too, had not been idle. About the middle of last century was published the famous book on the Social Realm of Christianity by the philosopher François Huet, ten years later Döllinger urged the Catholic associations to take up the social question, Bishop Ketteler published his book on the question of workmen, recommending Lassalle's productive associations, Christian-Social unions and periodicals were started everywhere, and the "Dom Kapitular" (Canon) Moufang drafted, under the influence of Ketteler, a comprehensive Catholic-Social programme. All these men recognised that in the direction of a policy of piti-

less *laisser-faire* progress was impossible, that self-help and free play of the forces failed, and that economic dangers cropped up, by the side of which formal political questions must appear unimportant and not worthy of serious consideration. Against a liberal view of the world even Bismarck never spoke better than Ketteler, and from the book of the Bishop of Mayence, Baron von Stumm could read the most awful passages to the Reichstag. Into this mood of the Catholic clergy crashed the May Laws: and now it seemed as if Cavour's prophecy, predicting an alliance between Ultramontanism and Socialism, were about to come true; for the Centre and Social Democracy soon after marched side by side into the election fray. And now the Protestant clergy also began to look alive. The crash had made the poorest still poorer, and decreased the opportunities for employment, social democracy had quickly become strong and had polled on the 10th of January 1877 nearly a million votes, the attempts on the life of the old Emperor by Hödel and Nobiling had called forth boiling indignation, but also penitent grief, and the decision on the Socialist Law was imminent. Should the Roman Church appear as a sanctuary of their liberty to the German working men? Was Protestantism to look on, cool and indifferent, at the wars that threaten disruption to a newly united people? Never! It was then that Stoecker led the way, fearlessly, almost foolhardily. He went further than Wichern, as he saw that the Inner Mission and the Association for those in Need no longer met the requirements of modern times, and as he wanted to summon assistance from the State itself, the Kingdom and the Government. He called Jesus the King of the Prole-

tarians, the Bible a workmen's book, and dared, amidst the rage and howling of the social-democratic masses, to acknowledge Him, who had once proclaimed to the poor the gospel, that happy message. That was Stoecker's greatest time; but probably also the time of his hardest fights. At meetings he had to fight the dissolute Hans Most and his gang, in the liberal press he was the object of an untiring campaign. A preacher, who went into an ice cellar and made exciting speeches, a Court Chaplain, who did not consider it his most sacred mission to protect property in every form: it could not be tolerated. Socialists in canonicals, it was urged, are worse than Socialists in working men's clothing; and all along the line mobilisation was in train againt the pietist Socialism. In this the peculiar talent of German liberalism was active, which had always succeeded in making enemies of all the forces of consequence of the period; but there was still another matter: not only the fear of an anticipated movement, but the greater fear of strengthening the power of the Church. Of course, the Church was dead and its grave the proud palatial building of materialism, and the priests were only tolerated as harmless comforters of old women; and now a priest was going among the people to win fresh strength for his faith from contact with the people and dabble in the trade of the professed politicians? There lurked a danger; and therefore it became necessary to weed out the noxious plant before it was too late. All reproaches which were at that time hurled against Stoecker are without foundation. He intended, as he wrote in 1894, to apply the Christian faith to the social world and fill the social world with Christian faith; of so lofty an aim even

a preacher of the Lord need not be ashamed. And Stoecker did not approach his task like a silly boy; he knew exactly what he wanted, what was possible and attainable, and his Christian-Social programme of 1878 proves, even though it contains important parts borrowed from Rodbertus and Rudolf Meyer, even to-day, how far he was ahead of the current liberalism in insight and knowledge of public requirements. He found enthusiastic disciples among the youths and the artisans, who still believed in a reconquest of the Golden Soil, but he was also attacked with relentless, almost insane fury, openly and secretly by the congregation of Most and Richter, with any weapon that seemed effective at the moment. The accomplishments of this man, who single-handed (for Pastor Todt was no enduring fighter) undertook the gigantic task of converting the city of millions, of rousing the rich from their indolent slumbers, of mollifying the temper of the poor, who were inclined to violence, would appear to us to-day as great, if behind the strong will, that had prevailed, also a strong heart had been noticeable. A strong and kind heart Stoecker did not possess. One does him probably no injustice in saying, that he was actuated not by love, the love for the lowest among the people, but by the determination to become powerful. He saw the Church, the servant of which he was, menaced and deserted, saw the influence of Romanism growing, and felt how atheism was undermining the world all around; he wanted to win the working classes back to the faith, and, allied with them, exterminate liberalism and found the Church's power on the firm rock of a social kingdom; for these reasons he undertook the campaign on behalf of Throne and Altar: the

throne was to warrant the altar's safety, but the altar was to be a few steps higher up than the throne. Had the Christian-Social idea meant more to him, than just the means to an end, he would not have burdened it with all sorts of hierarchical demands, not held so rigidly to every little point of the positive confession. Stoecker was, in the first place, always the militant churchman, who was not overcome by tender emotions; he wanted to recapture for his Church all her old glory,—his Church, that must not be changed by the breadth of a hair nor modernised in appearance. All or nothing: that was his battle-cry; and any route was welcome to him, by which all could be attained. Thus it happened that, when he began to feel a shudder at the undisciplined democracy, the Christian-Social idea in him receded more and more; thus he got intoxicated with Huber's belief, that the pre-revolutionary body of State might still be revived once again, and revelled in Stahl's dictum about the solidarity of all conservative interests; for these reasons the Court Chaplain (clever enough not to appear clever) made the second mistake of his life: he became a professed politician and member of the Conservative party.

This mistake profited neither the old party nor the new member. The Conservatives, a party of landed proprietors and peasants, in the fight for their agrarian interests to-day need all their forces, they cannot afford, in addition to the traders' hatred, to saddle themselves with the enmity of freethinkers to orthodoxy, and must not waste valuable time in the ever fruitless attempt to awaken dead matter to fresh life. The Court Chaplain became for them a good agitator and a ready speaker; but his personality and the support he lent

to stark dogmatism and anti-Semitism, brought down upon the agrarian demands the passionate hatred that so long had assailed them. The craft of the Conservatives of diverting skilfully into their own channels, any streams that might become dangerous, is not to be under-estimated; but it is still questionable whether they did well in having Stoecker as a recruit. For a few years he rendered the Christian-Social and the anti-Semitic movement innocuous, but he was then regarded as the Black Man in their ranks, who frightened away the agrarians of other parties; even those, who were of the same way of thinking with Counts Kanitz and Mirbach. Worse still was the effect on Stoecker himself. He was now obliged to show two faces: one for the Christian-Socialists and another for the Conservatives; there they wanted to hear of social reforms, no prim, prudish ones either; here of authority, of order and of strict discipline. The Stoecker of the Evangelical-Social Congress did not in the least resemble the deputy who spoke on behalf of the Conservative party; only the man who stands alone can always be honest and truthful to friend and foe, without having to resort to tactical tricks and wiles. So long as Stoecker stood alone he appeared as a self-contained unit, which in spite of its limitations and faults, commanded something almost akin to admiration. When he became a professed politician and a Conservative party man, he was forced to hush up matters here, there to keep silence altogether, now to show consideration, and again to grasp unclean hands; the time of the proud motto "All or nothing" was now past, and a period of weak compromises had set in. As though power could not also be acquired from within the solitude of a quiet study; as though

the three men, who as thinkers had the greatest influence on the past century, Hegel, Darwin, and Marx, would have needed to seek shelter with, and help from any party! Party politics really spoil the character, as Freytag has said; and cripple one's strength. The deputy Stoecker was no longer the robust man, who in the ice cellar had addressed the Berlin labourers: he had become a cunning tactician,—and yet had remained a preacher, who before all others should be just and truthful.

This development must be borne in mind to be able to understand what transpired in the autumn of 1895. Baron von Hammerstein, notorious for his dissoluteness for many years, was the Court Chaplain's friend; the latter needed th eall-powerful ruler of the 'Kreuzzeitung,' and tactical reasons made the politician keep silence. Baron von Hammerstein has cheated, embezzled, forged bills of exchange, and finally, to wind up worthily, hawked about the private letters of his party colleagues. No reporter's phantasy could imagine a more despicable hypocrite; and Stoecker, who must have known the man well, Stoecker, who cried burning shame over the least of the bank bandits, kept silence, and even later only uttered a few soft notes of melancholy grief over the painful case—for the party tactics forbade that the affair should be talked about. It was stupid and indecent, when it was pretended that Stoecker and Hammerstein stood on the same level; Stoecker never committed anything to forfeit the respect of his fellows; he acted precisely as well-disciplined party men always do act. In 1888 he desired Bismarck's dismissal; this wish, like the clever man he was, he hid in the depths of his bosom, and attempted with Hammerstein's aid to

sow discord between the young Monarch and the old Chancellor, without letting the Emperor suspect his aims. The epistle, known as the "funeral-pile letter," shows him as a master of tactics, also perhaps as a master of psychology, and if any one had said to him that it would have been more decent to state openly then, that Bismarck's policy seemed to him mischievous and pernicious, he would have laughed at the simple fool, who was still under the illusion that moral scruples could have any influence whatever on high and great politics. The politician was right, and could remain quietly with the Conservative party if they, who swore ostensibly by Bismarck's universal wisdom, still wanted him; the office of preacher, on the other hand, which demands from its steward the purest truth and the task to bring the Christian vital forces into action, he had to give up to others, who had not as yet become quite such masterly tacticians. Stoecker would not budge from his place. He was born in December 1835, and a rich life lay behind him, a life that was a fight, a victory and great accomplishment, a life full of good deeds and bad mistakes, after the manner of human mortals. He had preserved his health throughout all hardships, his tough body withstood all discomfort, and no excitement affected him: he travelled all night, spoke twice in one day, read some fifty garbled reports of his speeches, was as happy as a sandboy with it all, ate and drank and digested like a sturdy peasant, and slept the sleep of the just. A man who can stand all that is not used up and can still be useful to the Fatherland. He could not be angry with those who, without sharing his opinions yet admiring his strength, begged of him to choose:

whether he would remain a political business man or, after penitently confessing an error, he would return to his life's best work and once more become the herald of Christian sentiment.

To the foregoing sentences, which were written thirteen years ago (and the youthful, hot-blooded tone of which even to-day I do not care to modify), later on, after Stoecker's death, nothing essential was to be added. The peasant's son long remained robust, delivered many an effective speech, and for the cause that he considered good, he was a strenuous agitator. Gradually, however, the light of his star grew dim, the masses slipped from him, and he was somewhat inconvenient to his aristocratic friends, since he had lost favour at Court. The old Emperor had not loved him; thought him, for a preacher, not gentle and mild enough, but admitted that "the noise was necessary to make the Jews a little more modest." The young Emperor at first was enchanted with him, actually praised him up to a clever Jewess, whose house he was fond of frequenting, but later on he was influenced against him by Stumm and his colleagues, and in February 1896 he wrote to Hinzpeter: "Stoecker has finished, as I predicted years ago. Political pastors are an anomaly. Whoever is a Christian, is also 'social.' Christian-socialism is nonsense and leads to self-glorification and intolerance. Both are diametrically opposed to Christianity. Let the pastors look after the souls of their congregations, cultivate neighbourly love, and leave politics severely alone, since they are none of their business." This was meant to sound like the old Fritz's pronouncements; but did not quite hit it off. Stoecker had not yet "finished," had decided to retire from the Council of Eleven of the

Conservatives, then altogether from the party, but continued a force as organiser and town missionary, at least in Berlin. Since he was outlawed from above, his activity became more impeded. His unkind face looked worried and embittered.

To mortals this very mortal man never bowed. To the casual onlooker, he did not seem a lovable man. But a plucky man, who would rather go through life an outlaw, than rival the beribboned by competing in crawling in the dust. No spotless priest. But a man.

GALLIFET

Gaston Alexandre Auguste, Marquis de Gallifet, French general (*born* January 23, 1830, in Paris; *died* on July 8, 1909, at Paris).

GALLIFET

On all heights and hillocks of Gallic poetry from the days of d'Urfés, the creator of 'Astræa,' to the Republican times of Banville, Coppée, Richepin, the wanderer encounters the knight-errant, never lacking in wit, but always wanting in money, who is ever ready to fight in a good cause, and fearlessly to wrestle with the devil himself for some poor soul. In Hugo's 'Don César de Bazan' (first heard of in Germany from the boards of the comic opera stage), in Gautier's 'Fracasse,' and in the 'Musketeers' of the elder Dumas, the type, dressed differently according to fashion, revealed itself to the delighted eye; and since the romancers had discovered a fresh charm in the coupling of dissimilar creatures, one would often see the merry vagrant with empty pockets in love with some gentle maiden, noble beyond the dreams of man, like a *ver de terre amoureux d'une toile*, in Hugo's resounding phrase. This darling of the Romanesque fancy springs from the Spanish knight's romance, overtowered by Don Quixote in icy solitude. And when Edmond Rostand fitted him with Cyrano's proboscis and a tunic suitable to the fashion of

the moment, all Gaul shouted with sheer delight. At length the Frenchman saw once again on his boards, too long tenanted by Scandinavians and Russians, socialists and symbolists, the true Frenchman with the bright sword and the pointed tongue, the ideal Gaul, who can hold his own on the battlefield and in the bedroom. It did not detract from the Hercules of Bergerac that he was laughably hideous and thus not a born lover; it merely added a further relish. This figure recalled to the nation its heroic era, whose last glorious exponent, Joachim Murat, was shot in Calabria for high treason, and as a usurper. General of cavalry and hero of the boudoir: the very man for the gallery legend. The thirteenth Vendémiaire and eighteenth Brumaire, Saint Jean D'Acre and Abukir, Austerlitz and Jena: everywhere in the van. Nor does memory blame him for having directed the retreat from Smolensk to Wilna, and for going over to the Austrians, he, the King of Sicily, after the battle of Leipzig. Had Murat not helped the Emperor from Elba back to the throne, and fought to the last breath for the glory of France's arms? And how many petticoats had rustled through the motley life of the innkeeper's son! At Cahors, the home of Gambetta, there stands a monument in his memory. He remained the last whose name impressed such deeds on the popular imagination. His successor in heroic romance was D'Artagnan, the most famous of Dumas' three musketeers; in the prosaic legend of the army it was Gaston Alexandre Auguste Marquis de Gallifet, who died in 1909, on the evening of the 8th of July. Whether he was really descended, as was affirmed, not merely since the days of Dreyfus, from the Jew

Porceret Coulet, who was christened in the Provence towards the end of the sixteenth century and became a naturalised Frenchman (*Gallusfactus:* hence the name Gallifet), whether he could trace the roots of his family tree only as far back as Joseph de Gallifet, who in the seventeenth century, a brave filibuster captain, acted as governor in the French west of Santo Domingo: his true ancestors were Bayard, Lauzun, Murat, Bazan, D'Artagnan. These he tried to resemble. Always in the van of the fray, up to the threshold of old age the hero of women's gossip, ever in debt, and always an epigram on his lips. The representative of old of the France of old (to whom the most modern still clings in tender devotion). A not uncommon instance of a living being's attempt to live up to some favourite literary type. A few of the adventurous knight's characteristics Gallifet may have brought from his cradle, but he insisted on having them all, and dressed his hair until his head resembled those of the admired prototypes.

In the eyes of everyone; in the show window, round which the multitude surged. The more he was talked about, the more contented he felt; like Nectar he enjoyed the most malicious anecdote. If the others could think of nothing, he sought and found something himself. Born in 1830, the year of the romancer's triumph, he sees through his countrymen, and knows that Théophile Gautier, notwithstanding his 'Fortunio,' his 'Emaux et Camées,' his 'Capitaine Fracasse,' would not have become famous so quickly without his resplendent velvet waistcoat, and that to the French warrior who wishes to become popular, nothing is so necessary as

the *panache*, which in the densest crowd makes him recognisable from afar. And he does not fail to see to it, in Africa and in the Crimea, in Italy and in Mexico. His bravery borders on foolhardiness, but he never forgets to become subsequently the herald of his deeds. "At Puebla a grenade tears me from my horse. On recovering consciousness I noticed the intestines protruding from my stomach. What of it? If a boarhound's belly is slit by the tusker, we replace the guts and sew up the skin. Onward then! I scramble to my feet, stuff the intestines into my cap, and so away to the field hospital. The stomach was subsequently mended with a silver shield. When the price of silver dropped into a bottomless pit, my creditors were gloriously annoyed." This is but a small sample. Thus he spoke; and he also wrote like that. "I have had colossal luck. Whenever another opportunity occurred I always said to myself: the others must be amazing cattle! I really was not worth so very much more than they; but I had luck, scented the opportunities, and always knew whither to proceed. For that reason all gossip and abuse leave me as cold as a dog's nose. I do my duty, and don't worry in the least about what might happen to me in its execution." Was not such a horseman bound to be taken into the people's favour. When needs must, a thorough man (the attack near Sedan; the iron executioner's fist against the communards); and after the Peace of Frankfurt the shield and the hope, the drill sergeant and consoler, of the beaten army. Not without reason did the Duc d'Aumale liken him to Montmorency, whose rank was Duke of Luxembourg and Marshal of France, but who was called the

upholsterer of Notre Dame by the people, because he had brought home so many regimental colours from the Franche-Comté and from Flanders, and who idealised him, his unscrupulous debauchery notwithstanding. Soldier and *bon vivant*, hero and *gamin*, the tongue as quick in attack, as the horse: that pleases the Frenchman, and more still the Frenchwoman. The beauties of Republican society were as much gone on the Army Inspector as once was Eugenie on her Louis's ordnance officer. Some small compartment was always to let in the heart of the Marquis. His wedded bliss with the banker's daughter (Mlle Laffitte), whom he married in order to effect, in his own way, a financial reform, was of short duration, and the lawless round dance among women continued for longer than is usually vouchsafed to average manhood. (An affair with a woman, too, turned the grim Rochefort into a bitter enemy of his. Enmity that overlaps into politics and breeds new parties was often born in an alcove.) It is a marvel that this worn-out woman-hunter, in times of stress, never lost the certainty of his view; even in Algiers and later on, commanding the manœuvres, he was as fresh and active as the youngest lieutenant. And always ready to leap over the head of the man in front, as over any other obstacle. His hatred persecuted André, the demagogue, as fiercely as the mountebank *grand général* Boulanger. "That man," it thundered from his lips, "must not attain his goal. An infantry soldier, who looks bad on horseback. And for the *rôle* he wishes to take, I was created." He was not to snatch it away from him. If he had had his way, the show general would have been hauled from

his black horse, and, after a court-martial, placed against the nearest wall and shot.

The Bonaparte *rôle*, of which both of them dreamt on the Champ de Mars and in the Dome des Invalides, Gallifet also did not actually play. He only prepared, during half a lifetime, the mask, the costume, and the requisites. And probably in the evening of his life he regretted bitterly having wasted so much time, instead of ringing up the curtain on the drama. The man probably looked stronger than he was; and when his creative desire, in the throes of labour, realised that it could give birth to nothing of consequence, he took refuge in an epigram, in some impertinent *bon mot*. (The case of Hans von Bülow. To him, too, such discharges were a necessity of life, and his brusque jokes were nearly as famous as those of Gallifet.) After the Commune he said: "I am reproached with having treated the Arabs more gently than the Parisians. Quite true. The Arabs had a God and a Fatherland; our heroes of the Commune boasted of being without either. Besides, I never valued life, especially that of others, very high. And had I been the bloodthirsty rascal that I am painted, my superiors would not have proposed me for a commandership of the Legion of Honour. But I had no desire to fish for a small bit of ribbon in the blood of my co-citizens." When his friend Gambetta was contemplating a new dictatorship, and let the leader of the corps into the secret, he replied: "For periods of crisis I am adapted as none other. I should like to know the responsibility that I would refuse. Only, my good friend, as a soldier I am stronger than you; and I shall have you locked up without ado if you

bore me." ("I am quite prepared for that," replied Gambetta, "but since politics do not amuse you, I shall soon be fetched out of prison.") When by the *loi de prévoyance* the white-headed sixty-five-year-old man was obliged to resign from the army, he complained: "Such insane laws could only have been passed by parliamentary idiots. As though I had not enough strength and nerve for another ten years of office." Four years later he allowed himself to be humbugged by the parliamentary idiots. Waldeck-Rousseau stood in need of a name for the war ministry that would inspire confidence in the army, disorganised by the Dreyfus quarrel, and Gallifet allowed himself to be influenced into accepting the office by the brothers Reinach, although he was told openly that he had been chosen to become responsible for the saving of the Jewish captain. The dull life of the retired officers, whom the flatterers of yesterday passed by with a curt greeting, did not suit the hale and strenuous one, who for so long had basked in the sun of publicity: and so he quickly decided to become the Dreyfusards' Minister of War. "Could I leave the army, to which my life belonged, to its worst enemies' tender mercies?" He did not worry when it was said of him that he had rediscovered the old Semitic heart and that Josef Reinach (whom Rochefort called *Boule-de-Juif*) had bought him for the Jewish cause. Since he had never been Commander-in-Chief, never led an army into the fray, he wished to be War Minister at least. And so he was for eleven months. He sat, a glittering, noisy Gaul, by the side of Waldeck, endowed with almost British coolness, and, in spite of the charnel call, beside Millerand, the social democrat, on the front

bench at the Palais Bourbon. After the verdict of Rennes he issued the watchword: "*L'incident est clos!*" He obtained an amnesty for all mixed up in the Dreyfus affair, and bore the scornful insults of the Nationalists and the Antisemites like a hailstorm in autumn. "'Tis part and parcel of the season." Then he tired of the new *rôle*. To allow the Supreme Court of Justice to find in favour of Dreyfus, and to be co-operating in democratising and socialising the State body—those had not been his intentions. He did not want to have the Army and League of Patriots always against him, and the foreigners and enemies of the army in his favour. He also, perhaps, counted on a reaction that might stand in need of a sword. Surely not in Parliament. But no opportunity must be missed! One afternoon in May he sat down on his taut breeches and indited the following to Waldeck: "*Ne pouvant digérer les énormes couleuvres et les crapauds que vous me faites avaler en ce moment, je donne ma démission.*" Subsequently he rewrote his resignation in a more correct form. But in his first fury he did speak of vipers and toads that he had been told to swallow and could not digest. He considered himself too good to be utilised as a signboard for a rotten firm. And for three days he was once more, as after Puebla and Sedan, the hero of the hour, and the principal subject of conversation and boulevard gossip.

I made his acquaintance at the War Office. An Academician of his acquaintance had proposed to introduce me to him. "You will see something curious; the last specimen of a dying race." Gallifet had to reply in the Chamber to a Nationalist deputy, but had an hour and a half to spare for us. There stood

the all but septuagenarian. Scarcely of medium height, slim, and still supple as a young reed; close white stubbles on the bronzed face, with the boldly protruding nose, and the merrily twinkling, filibuster eyes. The small hands, cared for like those of a lady of fashion. In spite of the moustache with the waxed points, not at all martial, more the cavalier than the cavalry soldier. The elegant figure enveloped in an atmosphere of the *Ancien Régime*. The desire to appear the Marquis and the ladies' man at first sight (much as his deadly enemy, Rochefort, in his best days deported himself) was perfectly obvious. From tip to toe a nobleman and drawing-room hero, with the true Parisian's talent for gossip. It bubbles over like an inexhaustible spring. "To-day I have to go once more on the carpet. It does not matter. I am not so easily got under. But our patriots are queer fellows. Your Emperor, who with all his might is endeavouring to expedite a reconciliation, does not know the species. If he would but give up the idea of coming to Paris! We have, of course, nothing against it. But there is Déroulède, whom I esteem very highly; there are the two Leagues of Patriots; there is M. Rochefort, whom every cabman reads. If these gentlemen start a noise, we shall have the most glorious street rows with results impossible to foretell. For that reason alone no Government should take upon itself the responsibility for such a visit. The Emperor will have to be dissuaded from it. Who can do it? Me he probably does not consider as quite worthy of belief, since in August, against my will, I put my foot in it. A curious case. Do you remember the speech he made in August on the battlefield of St Privat, and which had, so to speak, two fronts?

'The French soldier, too, has fought valiantly for Emperor and fatherland; and we remember in mournful admiration all those who, Germans and French, after a fierce tussle, are now united in the eternal peace of God before the throne of the highest Judge.' The speech did not take well here; rather was it looked upon as hurtful. But your Emperor must have expected much of it. Two days previously, Fürst Münster, the Ambassador, sent to enquire whether on the eighteenth I could receive him very early. With pleasure. At the last moment I was obliged to put him off, as a Ministerial Council had been summoned. That surely took precedence. When Münster subsequently arrived he seemed embarrassed, and almost annoyed. The Emperor, he said, had expressly commanded him to read to me the speech at the same hour when it was being made on our eastern frontier; and now he would have to report that the punctual execution of this order had been frustrated. Very polite, but just a shade too romantic. Since then I have not stood quite so well with him as formerly. These diplomats always seem to think that we have as little to do as they, and should always be at their disposal. But surely yours are the very people who should know better; they know the burden of work a poor War Minister has to carry. Your army is worthy of the highest recognition. It has defeated us. As a Frenchman, who loves his fatherland, I can never cease to deplore this National calamity. But as a soldier, the expert must speak candidly: our defeat was deserved. In organisation, strategy, and discipline the German army was far ahead of ours, and its victory therefore no fortunate chance, but a neces-

sity, wrested from the nation's fate. Had the stupendous work done by your Moltke and Roon remained without result, the professional soldier would have to despair of his calling. Why had we not prepared just as diligently? Why were there hitches almost everywhere in our General Staffs? Our defeat was our own fault. And my old soldier's heart rejoices, despite all patriotic grief, that the experience, the great achievement has been rewarded according to merit. Justice in those days demanded Germany's victory. . . . But please do not betray me. Otherwise bucketsful of filth will be heaped on my head."

Thus he rattled on like a shower of grenades. No trace of dissembling. Rather an attempt to bluff the stranger. The latter had of a certainty never conversed with a French War Minister, and would open his eyes wide on hearing from Gallifet, the idol of his cavalrymen, such a verdict on the German army. The witty General may after all be pardoned this little easement of his spleen. He was permitted to say in the native land of M. Chauvin, that in the French army really only the music came up to justifiable expectation, and the hearers laughed. When the fall of Ferry was being engineered, Gallifet, who was then in command of the twelfth army corps, went about Paris and told everyone who would listen that he was shortly about to extinguish the Republic's life-light. As the *exécuteur de la volonté nationale*, be it understood. The people were tired of the Republic and would hail the Monarchy with joy, did they not fear that Germany might see in it a *casus belli*. An anti-Republican article in the 'Cologne Gazette,' and the elections return a Conservative Chamber. This cue brought

him out from behind the wings. He would behead the most impertinent of the Republicans, would abolish the freedom of the press, and govern for at least a year and a half without any Parliament. Only then would France be able to tolerate Liberalism, and the umbrella of the Comte de Paris. George Monk, who fought for Cromwell, then declared war on his Parliament and conducted Charles II. back to London, was his prototype. Anybody else, on the least indication of any such intentions (about which Hohenlohe as Ambassador sent a long report to Bismarck), would have been promptly court-martialled. Gaston Alexandre Auguste remained France's bright blade. Decazes and his followers called him "Our Monk"; but towards restoring the Orleans he did nothing effective, and with all his rattling of words he never succeeded in being taken seriously by the politicians. Yesterday the intimate friend of Gambetta, and to-day the hope of the Monarchists; yesterday slaughterer of rebels, and to-day colleague of Comrade Millerand. Filibuster, like his ancestor, with a touch of the Tarascon. But Puebla, Sedan, and the far-off glimmering *panache:* sufficient for an immortality enduring to the end of life. No longer. In legend Gallifet may survive; history will forget him. For his will to be powerful was only backed by short-winded mannikins, and thus over and over again befooled by Dame Fortune.

IBSEN

Henrik Ibsen, Norway's greatest dramatist (*born* March 20, 1828, at Skien, in Norway; *died* May 23, 1906, in Christiania).

IBSEN

In his very first work, that was of importance to him and to us, in the drama "Catilina," Henrik Ibsen sided in spirit with the party of insurrection. Soon there followed in proud sequence Brynhild's (Hiördi's) defiance in "The Vikings of Helgeland," and that of Jarl Skule in "The Pretender." Next appeared "Brand," the man who renounces the Ego and society, and seeks for his goal in the clouds; "Peer Gynt," who made the journey in reversed sequence. Next, the raid of the "Emperor" against the "Galilean." In between, like delicate thumb-nail sketches, a few plays scoffing at marriage and the political party. Finally, the immortal cycle of dramas for which his former works had served as introduction and preparation. The curious feature about this is, that Ibsen's first and last dramas approach each other again in a softer light. But in all the others produced in between, his heart, as it was formerly with Catilina, Brynhild, Skule, Brand, and the Emperor, is now with Nora, Dr Stockmann, Frau Alving, the murderess and suicide in Rosmersholm, the murderess and suicide Hedda Gabler, and the sensually obfuscated Hilde Wangel; or with Ekdal, suffering from

the mighty in bourgeois society, and with the other degenerates and outcasts. They are bewitching descriptions in which a soul, agitated to its utmost depth, hurls the protest of the independent with all its strength against the habitual morality of to-day. The shattering criticism of Ibsen and his fellow-fighters, their revolutionary tendency, driven to a point, coincide in the matter of time with Socialism, Collectivism, Nihilism, and their counterpoises, the oppressive rule of militarism, and the bold reactionary attempts, which seek to shelter behind the strength of the army. This class of literature caused a sensation all the world over. It sharpened the sense of responsibility in the more noble-minded. It advanced the workmen's movement, the emancipation of women, the cause of peace, and it offered fresh incentives to art and literature. Later on, however, the ethic workers banded themselves together in energetic resistance against the exaggerations of which this form of literature had been guilty.

For it cannot be denied that their unlimited individualism (which later on Henrik Ibsen himself tried to modify), together with other factors, has undoubtedly fostered the unheard-of brutality of anarchism, the voluptuous intoxication of youth, the doubt of decadence with regard to freedom and labour, and the flight from actuality and science to religious mysticism. In explanation I could recall the decay of spiritual life in Norway, which originally roused Ibsen and many others to fury. I could describe luridly the swamping, mediocrity, tradition, hypocrisy, dry rot, and pusillanimity of a puny, immobile bourgeois society. But one has a presentiment of all that oneself while reading Ibsen's works. There-

fore will I rather say a few words about the art, to which in them expression is given. For when all the waves and cross-currents of the disturbed ocean have passed over us, and we have followed them ourselves, the great masterly art of these works will preserve them permanently in the realm of the phenomenal. Their innermost essence is the temperament, the events, environment, even the atmosphere to the farthest distance; everything in them is loosely composed. The action rises in a brilliant line and mirrors multi-coloured the idea of the whole piece. I should like to know, who in all the world's literature possesses a similar power, who could have accomplished such concentration of dramatic means. No dead point, no superfluous word in the whole composition. Others may have accomplished the same by means of purely mechanical technique: Henrik Ibsen succeeds in the strict service of the spirit.

His masterly artistic skill appears all the greater, when we remember that of his subjects a good many are not in the least dramatic, but epic. At some important moment the acting characters tell of themselves what is necessary, to him or those with whom they are concerned. One might say, that out of what they tell they spin their own life's thread. Nearly all the dramatic tension manifests itself in the desire to know who is the teller, and what kind of person the listener might be. This we learn quite gradually during the progress of the narrative, interrupted here and there by some incident—some incident that carries on the tale. We are before an Areopagus that holds an inquiry, in which life and death are involved. For that reason the statements are of the utmost importance, and for that reason we must not

allow a word to escape us. Here, at last, there is more involved than the simple question, how he gets her, or how it happened that he did not get her. But such a gift is quite unique; it is scarcely likely that Ibsen will have many successors. Added to this, that his touching compassion for the unfortunate, even for criminals, and his hatred for the accomplice, human society, leads him to injustice, even to cruelty, one comprehends why participation in these inquiries and declarations of self frequently becomes quite painful.

Even though it is well to remember that the unfortunate, who are in conflict with the laws, are often far more worthy than their judges, we must yet be just to these judges; they, too, must be judged with the same compassionate understanding, especially those among them, who themselves suffer from their fellows' delinquencies and are quite innocent of their misfortune. But it is these very unfortunate ones whom Ibsen sometimes derides and detracts, in order to make the others appear greater. Here a reflection forces itself on us, which will probably become more and more the general opinion. As a thinker Ibsen stands not so high, as he does as an artist; his knowledge of life and his objectiveness are not so great as his passion. The dramatist's force of ideas probably shows itself at its greatest strength in his psychology; and with Ibsen this is not always based on a sound foundation. The superstructure is always exemplary, as, for instance, in "Nora," but the fundamental idea on which it is based: that Nora (who lies—and who is more worldly wise than those who know how to lie?) should not have known what is meant by a forgery of a bill of exchange, leaves much to be desired. The premisses for the plot of the "Wild Duck" are

that the fourteen-year-old martyr believes in her father, although that chatterbox can scarcely utter a true word. Now, we all know that nobody realises more quickly than a child, whether dependence is to be placed on the word of those, on whom it is dependent. Ever since her fourth year Hedwig must surely have been fully aware of it; if any one doubts this, let him remember his own mother. What induced the good professor, brought up by gentlewomen, in "Hedda Gabler" to take Hedda to wife? That is surely as incomprehensible as the fact, that this lady, charged with dynamite, could hold out for about thirty years without the least explosion, and without her surroundings noticing how matters stood with Hedda. To this must be added the daring, in some cases actually wrong application of his researches into suggestion, hypnotism, and heredity. The power of heredity, as yet little explained, Ibsen considers stronger than that of education, which he does not take into account at all.

We were all affected to see the old master, after so strenuous a working day, and after so long an absence in foreign countries, hoist the Norwegian flag in his drama of little Eyolf. Quite against Ibsen's custom, the scene comes unheralded: a sure sign that it is an interpolation. Here in a state of strong emotion he himself has undertaken the *rôle* of his hero. Some have thought to see in this a token of his reconciliation with society. But it is more. As we grow older, the colours depart from us; whiter and whiter our head seems to sink back into the air, which finally will dissolve it into atoms. The same happens with our emotions. Contrasting colours seem to disappear into the infinite; they dissolve into a monotone. Ibsen

has gradually learnt to wait with the expression of a strong emotion, until it could be mirrored in a small picture.

It is ten years since Björnsterne Björnson, who saw the man of Skien, not always with an amiable expression, during a whole lifetime, wrote these sentences for the 'Zukunft.' I want to place them first to show how Norway, as the representative spirit of which Björnson will live on, judged Ibsen in those days. He was considered no more than a neighbour's son, whom one had known as an apothecary's assistant, as director of a theatre, as a poor devil with a restless head, and whom one could not consider capable of anything eminent or enduring. Not as one of the great in the world's poesy, as one *sui generis*, who out of his own strength laid down his laws of life, and with whom all the intelligence of the period will have to count; in love or in hatred, without some emotional tribute none can pass him by; none, who looks for the ocean or the stars, the hurricane or the great calm. He has not presented us with much since then: two dramas only, the spiritual and poetic values of which, high though they were, could not alter the judge's verdict. He was almost invisible, though he by no means intentionally evaded the eye of the curious; since March 1900, as he himself wrote to me, "a sick man, no longer fit for work." Nevertheless it was only now that he was seen, as befitted him. As the most warlike apostle, the most strenuous worker born within a century in the home of Teutonic poesy. For six long years he was dying. His body, with nothing of the hero about it, defied all weathers like a cairn from the far-away days of the giants. A thousand times he called upon death, and daily the

friends, to whom but this one wish remained, prayed for the consoler; and ever it seemed as though the body reared against the final blow.

White and whiter the head receded into the air, it appeared more venerable, almost saintly in the pale glory of his imperturbable will; then, on the eve before Ascension-day, the heart was silent, that during eight-and-seventy years had beat so fiercely in its dark solitude; at length came the night. The fatherland that had once reviled the awkward monitor and driven him into foreign parts "with the bundle of care and the sandals of anguish," now offered him a grave of honour, and the king followed at the head of the mourning procession. What a wealth of wreaths on that coffin! As though the human race were mourning for their darling. How many paper flowers! Was it necessary once again to resuscitate all the old anecdotes which irreverently reveal to the philistine the great poet's all too human traits? What should be known about him has long since been told by Georg Brandes and Henrik Jäger. What he had to say is written in the complete edition of his works. Buy them, read them, and read them again; and don't ask why the creator of such a world loved his pose and his antics, why he was not always quite sincere, and sometimes acted the sly conjurer. Perhaps he knew of no better means for preserving his innermost ego; perhaps it was his "Arceo." During three decades nothing but abuse and scorn: without some method of self-defence scarcely to be endured. Wagner acquired a saviour's grimace; in Zola there grew the desire to fight for an uncontestable world's fame outside the lists of the tournament; Ibsen accustomed himself to suburban

trickster's manners. It would be best for all three of them if no letter, no snatches of conversation, no polemic saying of theirs were preserved, and only their work bore witness for them. . . . I have so often spoken about Ibsen, when he was still being scoffed at and reviled in Scandinavia, Germany, France, and England, that anything new I am not (or not yet) in a position to reveal. For this reason I have selected from among my attempts to grasp Ibsen's character, this one, about which, unasked, he wrote to me that it had given him pleasure on his bed of pain. The distance and the picture are as yet unchanged.

Before the soft youth of Nazareth, whom the Baptist had hardened in the cold waters of the Jordan, set out on his road to martyrdom, he spent forty days and forty nights in a desert. He wanted to be alone by himself, quite solitary, to look backward and forward undisturbed, and to listen in the quietest hours to the voices, whose alluring call had torn him from the communion of men. He wanted to weigh whether he should become a tool of John, with no will of his own, or should live for himself, out of his own strength. The rocky promontory, bounding the Dead Sea in the west, he climbed, dwelt there among the animals of the desert, and denied his body all nourishment. Everything fleshly, everything that influences the will, desirous of power and delight, should be withered and lamed; undimmed, the light of pure revelation should illumine the road he had to walk. The spot was well selected for contemplative introspection; nothing more lonely could be found in the world of Judæa. But the people whispered that it was inhabited by demons, and danger threatened any one resting there.

And indeed the youth, weakened by fasting, was approached by the tempter. He mocked the youth and demanded from him miracles which would prove superhuman power to the human eye. By a wise retort the youth waived aside this suggestion. And then the tempter took him up into an exceeding high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said unto him: "All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me." But the youth replied: "Get thee hence, Satan! For it is written: 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'" Then he descended from the heights to become the teacher of mankind, their saviour. From Sansara, the world of eternal rebirths, of lustfulness and longing, of deception of the senses and of mutable forms, he had severed himself voluntarily, as must all who wish to create something great from the spirit, and had become a pious citizen in Nirvana, the land of calm, where sinful desires are silent.

This wonderful symbol, sprung from the inexhaustibly rich world of the Veda, had attracted from his youth the gaze of the poet who lived among the Northern Europeans. Henrik Ibsen, the Northerner from the country of the strictest State church, of the most fervent ecstasy, of angry Christians of the type of Kierkegaard and Lammers, grew up in hatred of all sensual pleasures. Only within the realm of the Nazarene's morality, thus taught the orthodox around, were there any values worth striving for; only moral beauty is truly beautiful. The boy believed the doctrine; doubts arose in the youth with the awakening of sexual life. Is everything that on earth gives us pleasure really to be avoided as evil? Does the

sun only shine to call us to penitence in sackcloth and ashes? Is the sweetness of blossoms but a temptation of evil, the union of two hot, longing bodies a deadly sin? And is the sight of earthly pomp and glory only granted to test man, who, if of happiness and brightness he garners some, will be severely punished in a hereafter for such presumption? Still he remained in doubt. The youth was chary, the first impressions chilled him, whose sharp eye penetrated early below the surface, and he had not sufficient confidence in himself to attempt shaking what he had been taught to regard as the holiest of holies. Only when grown into manhood did he have the courage to look up to the God whom his people worshipped on their knees; only the man was able to apply a critical gauge to the holiest. A weakly race, wandering along crooked paths, he beheld; a race that from day to day chaffered for small profits, made hypocritical compromises, and, with hands folded in prayer, only thought of lying itself cunningly into heaven. What kind of a God was he who allowed himself to be deceived by that sort of human beings? The God whom the masses imagined was no longer the God of strong Christians. The resonant voice of the poet called through the land:—

> E'en as the race, its god grows old.
> An aged man with silvered hair
> Your god and father standeth bare.
> But such a god shall not be mine!
> My god's the storm; the breeze is thine,
> A youthful hero, strong and brave,
> No weakling shadowed by the grave.

This young God does not allow himself to be confined in the old, narrow church, nor does the ampler

space of the modern structure of worship suffice. Whoever wishes to feel, to approach him, must out into the open, up into the mountain heights, reaching to the sky: there, in the raging of the storm, the strong will reveal himself to the strong. For this reason Brand, the priest, seceded from the State church, flings the key of the house of God into the river, and accompanied by the bravest of his flock, he sets out to ascend the steep path, the toil of which is to strengthen them. But for this path of agony even the bravest are not brave enough. They pant for pleasures: and on the heights above breathing is difficult; their eye looks for flowers, and only finds glaciers; they hope for some delicious reward after their toil: and the stern leader only promises a crown of thorns. Then their dull mind turns to fury: with stones they drive away the man who tempted them away from their snug lowland, and they return,—to the yoke, to every-day drudgery, to a pension and humble subservience. Brand remains alone; he is bleeding from wounds, cut by superstition, and can, panting, realise how the multitude rewards saviours. He had tried to lead his flock to freedom, to the light, to their own young endeavour: they wanted to sleep on, not to steel their determination, nor to create for themselves with the conqueror's fist a salvation of their own. Why all this torment? Salvation had surely long since been promised. Surely there had been one who had suffered for all. . . . The old teaching was too much for their determination. Brand looks back down into the valley of those without a will of their own, that expands before his eye like a land of the dead. No bright merry life, no blood-red determination, not even an honest big sin, that at any rate needs courage

and strength, only puny grocers' victories and philistine disgrace. Never again back there! Rather death on an icy height, than a sham existence among whispering haggling pigmies, from whom the will to live has fled. Brand was unable to hammer the meaning of his dream into their hearts: he will therefore live it, and will by living set an example to the unteachable. Was that not also what the Galilean did? Never would his teachings have won the world, had he not manured it with the blood of his life. In this frame of mind, like his prototype, Brand is approached by the tempter and shown the blessed happiness of bourgeois content, shown that the overstrained bow of his wishes had so far only wounded the stormer of heaven, and that the harassed, if he lowers his claims on mankind and on himself, can within limits still experience joyful pleasures. In vain: over the iron will of the free the tempter has no power. Only a demented one still believes in him; nevertheless, Brand's determination does not weaken, Brand's foot does not stumble. He searches for the sun, he seeks for the God to whom he may kneel, to whom he may pray. An avalanche buries him. And over the snow-white grave of the lost one sounds the voice of the *deus caritatis*, who opens wide the portals of the Father's house to him, who fell in the greatest stress of endeavour.

Brand is not the only creature in Ibsen's world's realm who is approached by the tempter. The Roman Emperor Julian and the shipowner Bernik, Jarl Skule, and Pastor Manders, Rosmer, Solness, and Allmers, Helene Alving, Hedda Gabler, and little Hilde Wangel, all were tempted by the evil one; and even the cool-blooded woman of the sea was once

confronted by her dream in a tangible shape that lured and drew her into the boundless never-resting element, which is subservient only to will and power. Many followed the seducer and suffered the fate of presumptuous human kind. Many stopped their ears against this tempting call, crept back into their duty's shell and there pined away, as did the lamed Wild Duck in the attic of the photographer Ekdal. None of them prospered. All sought with longing heart that joy of living which poor Oswald Alving, poisoned by his patrimony, would conjure up on his canvas. But all were under the spell of a view of the world that ennobles the spirit, but renders it void of happiness, all had to take to anæsthising, deadly drugs to snatch a ray of sunlight. A dark land, a land without promise; and a human race bereft by the Christian law of its courage in heathen cheerfulness and enjoyment of the senses, similar to that of which Nietzsche said: "In this to and fro between Christian and antique, between cowed or lying Christianity of morals and equally dispirited and embarrassed playing at the antique, modern man exists and fares badly with it; the inherited fear of the natural, and again the renewed charm of it, the longing to have a support somewhere, the impotence of his understanding that reels to and fro between the good and the better: all this creates an absence of peace, a confusion in the modern soul, that condemns it to a fruitless and joyless existence." Is not the land of this human race, where every iconoclast is regarded as a criminal, in spite of all the noise of everyday bustle, as still as the realm of the dead? The apparently young Europa groans under the corpse-like load she dragged along from Asia on her back; her children, even in broad daylight, look like ghosts;

and when the Emperor Apostata, who was not to see his third empire, the realm of joyous and beautiful truth, has expired in Ibsen's world historical Galilean drama, his Christian nurse is justified in speaking of living dead and of dead living.

The poet grew older. In the Orient and in the south of Europe he had lived a richer, warmer life, and now with the heavy step of old age he returned to his northern home. The image of the tempter had not left him in the "southern glory of the sunny shore," and now accompanied him northward to the huts in the land of snow. But the poet also brought home a world-wide fame; and he, who like Brand had been driven from the fatherland with a hail of stones, saw himself suddenly now received as a hero by a grateful people. Like a hero? The comparison does not seem quite to fit. A hero surely influences his people, acquires new possessions for his people by fighting, or at least strengthens the determination to be further creatively active. The poet looked around him. What had he effected? Nothing, or at any rate nothing good, nothing that now seemed to him desirable. The great gauge of his moral ideals, to the dimensions of which he had formerly tried to fit mankind, he had long since shelved, recognising the futility and the danger to life of such a hopeless task of Procrustes. Long since he had also realised, that with Puritanical pathos, with preaching a truth that shall be true for all, to-day nothing much can be done, and that it is better to leave to the average rabble the lie of life, the irritant principle, the fontanel which the doctor applies to the neck of the patient. The breed of the Peer Gynt does not die out; and is it just, is it kind, to take from this race everything it needs for life?

That is what Ibsen, man and youth, had done. He had thrown the key of the church-door into the water, had weeded out from the soil the ancestral belief in ghosts, had unveiled all conventions and compromises, even the most holy, as deceptions and hypocrisies, had extinguished all beacons which on starless nights had hitherto lighted the way for those seeking a safe high-road. Had he not himself been a tempter, one who induced humankind to soar higher than the strength of its wings was able to lift it? Happy noblemen he wished to create, men of courage and marrow, women proudly giving themselves, but in the submission preserving their human rights, a clean and distinguished people living in new beauty. And what did he see now? Their poet was surrounded by emancipated women proud of their barrenness, by those still in the doll's age, who as poor victims exhibited their chains and with accusing finger pointed out the sinful men to the judge. Where were the mothers of the strong race of the sun? And where the fathers? Stockmann was still burgomaster, Kroll still rector, Berniks and Werles still managed the big merchant firms, Sterngaards and Helmers pleaded before the court, in the pulpit stood at best a weakly Manders, and Public Opinion was delivered morning and evening into the house by Aslaksen the printer, by Peter Mortensgord, and their hirelings. And still there was always being formed some association, some commission, some union, where, instead, the work of one strong man ready for sacrifice would alone have been of any use. The "great crooked," the ever pliable had held the field. And the revolutionary-minded youth decried the poet as a humbug, fond of using big words, but at heart a thorough philistine. So that was the sum

total of a long life! . . . Of a life? The pity of it: for the poet had not lived according to his precepts, had never turned them from theory into reality. Earlier in life he had asked his compatriots, "Where among us is the man who has not at times felt and recognised within himself a contrast between word and deed, between intent and task, between doctrine and life?" Now he made Solness say: "When I look back, I really have built nothing, and sacrificed nothing to be able to commence building. That is the entire consummation." And in the poem of the master builder, who in a fit of vertigo falls from the turret of the house he himself had built, he gave us the tragedy of the poet, who cannot scale the height of the views of life propounded by himself.

On this work, which alone would suffice to show how foolish, how unconscionable it was to couple Henrik Ibsen's name with that of any other living being as his equal, there followed the vesper fairy tale of little Eyolf. To the casual observer it may then have seemed as though the flag were at length flying from the ice palace of the Magician of the North, and as though the once implacable one was willing to capitulate and to shelter his tired old limbs behind the modern cult of sympathy. The closer observer, remembering that Ibsen's liars must be judged according to their actions, not by their speeches, must have noticed at once that there was here no thought of any capitulation. The poet showed an ill-starred couple, lacking in strength and in faith, to whom as a last consolation nothing remains but the attempt to lull their consciences in a compassionate gloaming, and to whine again for mercy at the throne of the long-since-forgotten God. "That," the Creator of this dusky

world seemed to call out, "is all you are fit for, you who are decayed in will-power and incapable of fruitful action." And it seemed as though from the icy mountain-tops Zarathustra's holy laughter could be heard, as though the grey old mountaineer were speaking on high to kings or to serfs: "Where are greater follies committed than among the compassionate?"

Right up there continued the road. Was it not Jean Paul who has said: "Man ascends the green mountain of life only to die among the glaciers on top"? Thus fared John Gabriel Borkman. At a high clearance in the woods he dies in the snow, at the foot of a dead pine-tree. He, too, had long since been all but dead. "A dead man you are," his wife had said to him; "rest peacefully in your grave, and dream no more of life." And this wife, who though hard and heartless to all appearance, loves him best and knows him best, realises at once the cause of his death: "He could not stand the fresh air!" A miner's son, who often accompanied his father down into the mine, where the ore sings with joy when released by the pick. In daylight his fancy is awakened to feverish night life. Could one but produce the ore in large quantities, make it of use to mankind, by great enterprise create wealth all around! That would be the kingdom, the power, and the glory. An Emperor's dream, the dream of a Bonaparte, born into a world of great industries. On the other hand, a Bonaparte who in his first battle had been wounded and become a cripple, would never have risen to be Napoleon, the world's ruler. That was the tragi-comical fate of John Gabriel. This Lesseps, in whom slumbers a lyric poet, lives

in a world, where reigns not the will but the imagination. In his fancy he imagines himself a benefactor of mankind, to whom the lofty end must sanctify all means, and yet at heart he seeks for nothing but power, mastery, and the satisfaction of ambitious desire. Twice the tempter approaches him, twice he, the phantast, striving after the uncommon, succumbs to temptation. He gives up the girl he loves, because she is coveted by another, by one who can be a staff and support to the climber. In vain; the forsaken girl refuses her hand to the suitor, and the rejected scents behind her refusals the former friend, on whom he now vows vengeance. And when John Gabriel finds himself at the head of the large banking firm founded by himself, when he proposes to stud the country with factories, to release the "values that command life," to reap golden harvests, and finds the necessary preliminary capital is wanting, he tampers with the deposits confided to his care. Why not? He will, he must, surely, prove victorious; in eight weeks, perhaps in eight days, the deficit will be covered again and nobody at all any the wiser. Again in vain: the authorities do not concede to a captain of industry the same seigniorial privileges that they admire in kings and emperors of history, and John Gabriel, who yesterday was honoured like a monarch, is locked into prison like a common criminal. . . . In the cell and later, when he, lonely and shunned, continues his life of visions in a faded hall, he reopens his action. He did what he was allowed to do, was forced to do, what was to be of the greatest service to the common weal: he acquits himself. But not quite. With a fresh eye he reviews the

old action, and finds that he has only injured one, himself. He was not to be bowed by injustice or shame. He must out again into reality as soon as the prison walls are again behind him, into the budding, seething life, where there is always plenty to do for the strong. Poor fellow, fooled by illusions! He cannot, of course, stand the fresh air. So long as he is living in the realm of his imagination, has the *danse macabre* performed for him in his faded hall, and has some one who seems to believe in him, so long can he look upon himself as the victim of envious philistine morality, ever digging pitfalls for genius; can he, who wallows only in sensations and visions, call himself a sober calculator, and hope for an "hour of satisfaction" that will bring him fresh glory and fresh honour. In the blast of raw reality the wealth of bloom, highly forced in the artificial heat of the hothouse of hallucination, withers very soon. John Gabriel never would see the actuality; and as he steps into the open for the first time out of the close confinement of his room, he is gripped in the snowed-up mountain forest by death's cold hand of iron. Bold and daring, he had climbed the green mountain of life, and now he had to die on a glacier!

A superman? No; a phantast, grown up among the self-deceptions and falsehoods of an enterprising *bourgeoisie*, in whom imagination has untrammelled sway, and who has not the will-power for any big, fruitful deed — not even for a crime, which he can only commit shyly with a benumbed conscience,—and around him nothing but old people, long since decayed, full of ghostly chimeras. Two women. One lives for the phantom of a reputation which one cannot give oneself, which can only be received from

Society sitting in judgment; the other for the phantom of a love, to which everything—endeavour, creative power, thirst for knowledge—must be sacrificed, and which has jurisdiction over life and death. If for a few seconds the mists of illusion disperse, it will be seen that both are seeking one fulcrum, some being that belongs to them alone, that shall give their inner emptiness the consoling semblance of happiness. These grey sisters are joined by an old child, an old chancery clerk, who is completely lost in the mazy ways of the world, and suffers himself to be robbed and ill-treated by Borkman, because the latter encourages him in his poetic mania. All kinds of bungling people who get no comfortable rest, because they cannot fill up the chasm between desire and power. Borkman's son, the chancery clerk's daughter, and Frau Wilton, however, can do it. They care not for the weal or woe of anyone else, look, without dreams and emotions, to their own advantage; bold and insolent they make for their goal, and will reach it—even though the softly upholstered sleigh in which they are seated may run over one or the other among their relations. Only an assurance like this, that knows nothing of the strife of two souls within one breast, catches up with fortune in the chase of life. Ibsen made the teacher Brendel, no longer a solvent idealist, speak thus to his former pupil, Pastor Rosmer: "Peder Mortensgord never aspires more than he can accomplish. Mortensgord is capable to live a life without ideals. And that is the great secret of action and victory. That is the sum and substance of all this world's wisdom. Basta!"

. . . Solness, the master builder, was tempter and

tempted in the same person. He had promised a little girl a fairy kingdom; had, by promising the wonderful, disturbed the phantasy ripening into womanhood, and forced to admit his inability to perform when the young maiden demanded fulfilment. In this he resembles—and not in this only—Rubek the sculptor, the poor hero in Ibsen's last drama, "When we Dead Awaken." He, too, has promised to two women actually, to lead them, as Satan once led the Youth of Galilee, up a high mountain and show them all the glories of the world; and he, too, could not keep his word, as he was unable to breathe in high climes. He ascends the summit, but he dies of the fatigue of the steep road, like Solness, like Borkman and Brand. All are snatched by death from the height which their imagination is able to reach, but their will not strong enough to hold. Ever and again, with an old man's tenacity, the poet returns to this symbol. Had he the Gläfiswall in his mind, where sleeps, according to North German saga, Brynhild, or the crystal rock of the myths in which, like on the golden mountain of the old Indian legend, the beatitude of Paradise is revealed to the dead? Perhaps. In his last poem he lifted the last veil; said quite plainly that his mountain towers to heaven from a land of the dead.

. . . A land of the dead! Not Böcklin's island, the peaceful majesty of which is shaded by giant pines, around the steep rock wall of which there plays a breeze of heroic beauty, and whose ferryman conducts the lifeless so lovingly with gentle oar to their last rest. A land of unquiet, busily active shadows without uniform culture, where people whisper empty

words into the early falling night. Here Rubek grew up; here, as sculptor, he sought for beauty—passionately, already almost despairing — as one in fever seeks the soothing drink, as one damned the banished Eden. At last he found her. Out of the hard stone he wanted to fashion a young woman, awaking, rising from the dead, in whose features and figure a new race was to behold the ideal of a new spiritualised Hellenic beauty. He carried the ideal within him; but young as he was, the confidence was wanting to fashion it himself out of his own consciousness. Then he met a maiden, who seemed to be sent to the North from the land of the Hellenes—from tip to toe a wondrous creature of Aphrodisian rapture. Her name is Irene; and, like Eirene the Roman Pax, she becomes for him a walking symbol of blissful peace. She listens to the suitor; the girl leaves family and home and follows the artist, the man. Really only the man; the artist she takes anyhow in the bargain. To her it is a natural duty to serve him also with her body — to give him, unveiled, everything he needs for his work. He is so attached to his work, expects so much from it; a good thing that she is able to assist him as model. But she thinks it no less natural that, work being done, she will rest in his arms. Why should he otherwise have wooed her, should have promised to lead her up a mountain and show her all the glories of the world? All the glories of the world to a fond maiden consist only in love requited. She gave him the body which only one may see; with a kiss he will repay the willing sacrifice. She waits in trembling, hopeful fear. He, however, scarcely moves an eyelid: he sees only the woman, sees only the

model; has no thought of loving caresses, only of the work that is to bring him fame. He will demonstrate how the woman — who is nearer to nature than the man rendered artificial by the cares of his calling and tiresome citizenship — frees herself from the bonds of ghostly chimeras and wakens to a free, personal life; how from an assistant and a child-bearer she becomes a human being, mistress of her own destiny. What is going on in the heart and mind of the model does not trouble him; he is only concerned with the mimic reflection of the emotions, to which he wishes to give expression. And when he talks enthusiastically of the glories of the world, he only does it to snatch for the cold stone a hot ray of fervent happiness. That is what a poet would do who, in search of a body for his ideal, does not care what becomes of those, who now want also to experience such ideal life. Irene tires of waiting. She has knelt to this man, has worshipped him like a god; and he is but an artist in search of fulcra for his fancy. He examines, measures, compares, and fans the ardour, which is not to be soothed and cooled in blessed embrace, merely to inflame anew the dying embers of his creative force. The girl, suffering from her maidenhood, learns to hate the work that robs her of the man. And when it is completed, and Rubek thanks her for the happy "episode," which by her aid he was enabled to experience, she severs her destiny from his. For hours, for days, she stood nude before the man, to whom she gladly gave all that a young woman can give— and to him she was merely a happy "episode," a model, a stimulant. She disappears, and Rubek remains alone.

He is no longer accustomed to be alone. The girl's longing he had felt; but then his Grecian appeared to him as a temptress, who wishes to drag the artist, striving after untrodden heights, down into the lowlands. What was he to do with a wife, or even a child, as Irene desired? Would he not have to say with Buddha, in what to other fathers is the most blessed hour, "A child is born unto me, a fetter has been forged for me"? He was in love with his work, and the creative atmosphere must not be desecrated by any impulse of vulgar lust. Now the work is completed, but what has become of the ideal? It seems to have fled with Irene! The ideal! Is there such a thing at all as an ideal that can be for all a standard, a guiding beacon on a starless night. Just as little as there exists a truth, that is true for all. The sculptor looked upon his work and found it small; perhaps not even modern. A pure maiden who has experienced nothing, suffered nothing, was to symbolise the day of resurrection to mankind. Rubek had reached those years when the ideals are locked away in the safe, as for everyday purposes they are anyhow useless. It now seemed to him a shocking waste of energy to teach people what they should be; it was much better, much more worldly wise, to show them what they are. Having been deserted by his faith, he recommenced on his work. The base was made wider: it was meant to represent the bursting earth-crust, from the cracks of which a swarming humanity presses to the light—a humanity under whose veneer of culture the sharp eye soon detects the animal grimace. The figure of the young woman is pushed farther away into the background, her victorious smile

now changed to a wistful look of sorrowful resignation. And in the foreground, by the side of a spring, cooling and cleansing his hand in the running water, sits the sculptor himself in despair, whose firm faith in the vanished ideal will never return. This, then, is Rubek's "Day of Resurrection." Thus views the man now, who once dreamt of a spiritualised Hellenic era, after all the pain of strenuous and overstrung endeavour, the life and aim of humanity.

The group pleases, and earns a world's fame for its creator. Also happiness? . . . Who thus imagines the day of resurrection, cannot be happy here below.

Rubek had shivered with cold in his glorious solitude. His æsthetic reflections on life had gradually weakened his will and his strength for coarse enjoyment and fresh daring. Now he longs for beauty; is she not, in the words of the exquisite artist Stendhal, *une promesse de bonheur?* By his talk he fascinates the daughter of some poor people, a merry, quite young maiden, promises her, as he did the first, all the glories of the world, and carries her home to the glittering cage. For now he is rich, men and women want to be modelled by him, and he now has something to offer a wife. But his wife is not satisfied for long with what is offered her. She is called Maja, like the Roman Isis and the Indians' veiled goddess of deception. She would like to be a mother, and have children and a husband all alone to herself; and comes to the painful conclusion, that in the artist there is too little of the man. She lives entirely in Sansara, the land of semblance and of desire, and finds herself mated with one possessed by the impulse for knowledge, who is no longer deceived by Maja's veil. Nor does Rubek find in marriage the hoped-for Indian summer

happiness; by the side of this wife, with her healthy, animal instincts, his wings do not grow afresh. In her company he was able to complete the old group, the stone figure of earthly misery; but fresh creative endeavour she cannot instil in him. For both the union remained barren. So they do what all married people do who are bored at home—they travel.

But in his homeland Rubek's mind becomes only still more dismal. Once he walked about here like a god; now he flutters like a bird of prey in a cage from corner to corner. Not in the mood for work. Since the multitude saw in his group all kinds of things, which he had never intended to convey, but did not grasp his real idea, he no longer cared for work; to what end, to be so coarsely, presumptuously misunderstood? Now his only enjoyment consists in humbugging the honourable *monde entier*. People want portrait busts? Very well: they shall have them, and never notice how much they resemble our most familiar types of animals. Horses, donkeys, oxen, dogs, and pigs; a trifle developed by selection and acclimatised to the human race, but only just a trifle. And these "cunning works of art" are weighed up with gold! Rubek is as pleased as a mediæval monk, who has managed to smuggle some filth in stone into some corner of the cathedral. Otherwise he is dull, sleeps badly, and yet longs for the night, as the days are long and dreary. And in a sleepless night there reappears to him for the first time the ideal of his youth; and soon they meet in the broad light of day.

He looks different from what he did during the period of his merrily soulful ascension; was bound to appear different, since the eye of the beholder had changed. In a world of anxious, conscientious scruples,

heathen beauty, replete with thoughtless longing, acts like an excrescence of a diseased fancy. And Irene comes among a world of disease, among weak, broken human beings, who are to be patched up by the doctor of the watering-place. What would happen to Aphrodite were she to step down from her bright temple into a Christian hospice for the mentally and bodily crippled? She would be regarded as mad, as an abandoned wanton, who ought to be gagged, and, when subdued, allowed abroad only under escort, lest she might work mischief. The same happened to Irene. The poor ideal has been grossly ill-treated. Dragged on to the greasy boards of low stages, she was obliged to excite the vulgar cupidity of the gaping mob as a "living statue," she was obliged to submit on unclean pillows to the embraces of men who were not seeking beauty's sanctifying touch, but an allaying of their lust; and, finally, there came the sanctimonious, put an end to such lewdness, and after a thorough psychiatric treatment, placed the tousled beauty in charge of a sister of mercy, who must not let her out of sight. Such a life leaves its mark. Irene is still a force, but one entirely out of intellectual control, and now blindly seeks to destroy everything that obstructs its instinctively chosen path. It is that *mania sine delirio* of which Schopenhauer, Ibsen's master, says: "The will, thus released, resembles the stream that has burst the dam, the horse that has thrown its rider, the clock with its check action removed." Even in former days Irene never troubled about conventionalities, as little as Hilde Wangel and the fishy-eyed tempter of the woman of the sea, and it is but natural that Rubek's marriage does not exist for her. And now she has lost all reflective consciousness, and

is only guided by intuition. She can understand what she sees; the past, however, and the future are hidden in a dense fog. She feels debased by the kiss from smacking lips, which she tried to avoid. The statue, for which she lent her body, becomes to her as a child that she had borne unto Rubek, and which the unmerciful father has cruelly mutilated. She is under the impression that she has always loved this child, and only hated the artist, who would not be a father. Every wry-sounding word she will punish with a prick of her little knife. She, she alone has done everything for the marble image, sacrificed body and soul to it, and because he let her go from him, no great work of the sculptor's shall ever be a success. And so powerful is the suggestive force of such hysterical will, that Rubek really believes that he owes everything to the helpmate of his youth, and that without her he is condemned to the restless, joyless weakness of the bungler.

And is it not really so, fundamentally? Can any one, who has lost the stubborn belief in his ideal, in the importance of his task, and only cares to copy satirically the animal kingdom, yet succeed in anything great?

Rubek would hold his newly-found love. Frau Maja? She needed little or no persuasion. She is thoroughly disgusted with the æsthete, who treats her condescendingly from above, and tells her daily that she is not suited to him. In former days he has told her of his plans for freeing mankind; now she would herself be free, free as a bird, free as Nora, the tortured singing-bird that escapes from its cage. Added to this, the arrival among the sick of a pretended invalid, a doughty hunter, boasting of his

powers, who in eating and drinking performs almost superhuman feats, and waxes charmingly sentimental when recounting how a little vixen had played him false. At the same time he pretends to be a great Don Juan, and barefacedly makes love to the woman, who, owing to her unhappy marriage, considers herself released from all marital obligations. That fellow has a strong will; he is no nervous artist; it would be possible to live with him. Is not Fauna a first cousin of the Roman Maja? Fauna longs for her Faun. The hunter of bears probably has a shaggy body. And when he beckons with a promising grin, she climbs with him into the mountains.

On high, at a Highland sanatorium, where the sick pump pure air into their lungs, the two couples meet. The wedding ring breaks asunder, and great is the joy that one can once again move freely. Maja runs to her slayer of bears. And Rubek intends, instead of slaving in a damp and cold cave with lumps of clay and blocks of stone, to fashion his life for the future into a beauteous sunny work of art. He is willing; but his will is lame in the wing, and he still remains but the poet of his happiness: he can dream it, but not fashion it. Poet: that is what Irene calls him, with the same emphasis of contempt in the word, which Borkman used when speaking of the old chancery dreamer's poetic twaddle. The poet had unmanned himself; woe unto the woman who gave body and passion to a poet, and not a thousand times rather bore sound children to a healthy man! What has a wasted life to offer to such a woman? Not more than a fleeting intoxication, such as the Bride of Corinth found in the cabinet of her beloved. The old poet is able to toy with his ideal, can wed it symbolically on

a clear summer's night in the Highland forest; but for action, bringing freedom and happiness, his will is no longer forceful enough. He could fashion an ascension in stone, but in the case of himself and the nearest to him, he does not succeed in performing the miracle of ascension. He has forfeited his life, his happiness to the task, his power of will to the search for consciousness. And even the proudest embodiment of his wildest dreams is now broken, worn and tired by the pilgrimage through an inimical world; with silent step she is followed by the sister of mercy with the piercing eye, who has already accustomed her to the word "sin" and its meaning, and who casts a black shadow into the brightest sunlight. Irene may tempt the friend higher and higher: on the summit of the green mountain her foot becomes frozen in the gritty ice, and neither the man nor the woman have sufficient breath, hot enough, to dispel the glacier mist. Frau Maja, with her hunter, finds the way in time from the mountain into the sheltering valley. The lost couple, however, are torn by an avalanche from the height, on which they were unable to keep their foothold, and which buries in snow the dead, who wished once more to waken. The sister of mercy, freed from her duties of guardian, calls after them: *Pax vobiscum!*

. . . . . .

Brand, too, was swept from the height by an avalanche, and across his grave had resounded the voice of the *deus caritatis*. "Brand has been misunderstood," Ibsen had said at that time; "it was merely an accident that I placed the problem amongst religious surroundings. I could have made the entire syllogism just as well about a sculptor or politician as about a priest." The work which he created thirty

years later, he himself called a dramatic epilogue. The name itself signifies that we must not expect simple human figures, perceptible to the senses, and must not be surprised, if we find ourselves in the icy land of the abstract. We are led to the highest and most inaccessible rung of the ladder of tragedy, according to Schopenhauer's æsthetics, from which we are to realise the heavy suffering, the misery of life: "We are deeply moved, and the diversion of endeavour from life is suggested to us, either directly or as an accompanying harmonious sound." The poet again takes up his old theme, and as a septuagenarian writes a digest-epilogue to his work. It is not easily unravelled, no easier than the second part of Goethe's "Faust," and the listener has to keep his ears open to be able to follow, across chasms and smugglers' paths, this "second grade dialogue," as Maeterlinck described the language of Ibsen's old age. But through the fog he who is gifted with a delicate ear can clearly distinguish the voice of Brendel, the bankrupt idealist.

If you wish to be happy, happy in the meaning of old Frau Maja's sham world, then you must live your life without ideals, and never aspire to more than you can perform. That is the great secret of action and victory. But if you aspire to the mountain heights, where walks the tempter, then gird yourselves early with a determination, which is not affected by the climate on high, and remember, *Velle non discitur!* No worse fate than that of the man, who is unable to retain his foothold on the height of his view of the world. . . . No worse fate? Is the slayer of bears and his Maja, are husbands and wives really so much to be envied? Is not a moment lived on high worth more than everyday life in the valley?

The God of the strong is merciful. He opens wide the portals of the father's house to those fallen in the hardest stress of endeavour, and is not angry with those who wished to see all the glories of the world. Who knows? Some bright morning he may again send some one, who lives as he teaches, dispels the wild chase of ghosts, and awakens to new life a human race, slumbering in their fashionably appointed vaults.

BÖCKLIN

Arnold Böcklin, painter (*born* October 16, 1827, at Basle; *died* January 16, 1901, at Fiesole, near Florence). His famous painting, "Die Toteninsel" ("The Isle of the Dead"), is in the Museum at Leipzig.

BÖCKLIN

THROUGH the dark blue of the water, unruffled by a breath, silently there drifts a boat. No sea-mew follows in its wake, no human eye greets it from the island, to which the ferryman is guiding it with a gentle dip of the oar. Still is the sea; still is the sky, from the dark storm-vaults of which thin streaks of fallow light descend; still is the boat which carries a dead to his last resting-place. It is no place of shudders, no miasmal morass, no vault of the Pharaos, the colossal blocks of which yield not the least cleft to either the sun or the heat of the desert sand. Indeed, in the rugged landscape of white and brownish-grey volcanic stone no bird seems to nest, and the eye searches in vain for a living soul. But the rock, fanned by a breath of heroic beauty, is overgrown to its highest point with a dark-green creeper, all kinds of grasses have forced their way through the stone, and giant cypresses overshadow the island's quiet majesty. The seed was probably once carried there by migratory birds. And humans, too, must have scaled the steep cliff; departing, they left behind the signs of human art: a sea-wall protects the stone against the impact of the waves; light, roomy

vaults, framed in marble, nestle between the ridges of the rock; and white from among the cypresses gleams an animal's image fashioned by an artist's hand. Is this reef, lavishly adorned by nature and art, truly the Island of the Dead? Across the sides of the boat a coffin has been placed. White is the covering-cloth, on it are flowers, roses seemingly, red, and never-fading laurel, and luminous in white is the figure, standing upright behind the death bier. Some genius lovingly conducting to his last rest some hero torn from his happy creations? The preacher of some far-off, forgotten religion? A mourning wife following the dearest, without enquiring the journey's end? Of the body, covered in white, scarcely the outline is recognisable. Once across, on *terra firma*, he will be unveiled. At the obsequies, which shall commence so soon as the fury of the storm is spent. On marble then rests the coffin, the lid is removed, and a soft evening zephyr gently warms the icy temples of him in his last slumber. A giant he is, one of a now defunct race of giants; not too long in the body, but broad in the chest, powerful in the skull; snowy white the luxuriant hair and the beard. He does not resemble a man worn out, rather someone who after hard work has stretched himself out to a short recreative rest; all the while it seems as though the great caverns under the projecting frontal bones must open and the gleam of a pair of eyes enliven heaven, earth, and sea, nature in its entirety, soulful and quiet.

Who knows? . . . Let but the night approach. Then perchance there will arise from the waters a triton, shake himself on the cliff and sound a blast on his twisted shell to summon the waves, and with

keen eye he discovers the strange guest. A stranger? No, he who rests there is no stranger to the merman. Often he saw him. Often he invited him to a gambol in the waves. Amphitrite's son beckons and summons his humid kinsfolk, laughing people out of the deep, who now learn to mourn over the first human corpse. The merriest naiads, who otherwise had nothing on their volatile minds but the desire to attract the little men and then to mock them, have their eyes clouded, the fattest sea rogue, who a moment ago was sensuously chasing the soft bodies of the mermaiden, feels a tear running into his tousled beard, and on the edge of the isle King Frog is croaking piteously. The sounds of mourning awaken the echo on the shore; the dispersed bones of the Bœotian nymph, who refused her love to the great Pan, begin to sound, dryads and other woodfolk hasten forward and join in the mourners' train. And there arises Aphrodite's merry head from the foam; a blue dolphin carries her, a green wreath partly conceals her voluptuous limbs. Who knows? The smile of the Thalassian goddess has before now raised life from the depths of the ocean's bed; mayhap she may coax the giant in the stone sarcophagus back to life. He raises himself, rests the head, benumbed by a long sleep, on his strong hand, and stares with wide-open eyes into the world, illumined by the last glow of the celestial fireball dying away in the west. *Vita somnium breve.* . . . Is the dream ended? And is this reef, lavishly adorned by nature and art, truly the Island of the Dead? No sombre funereal pomp, no cross, and no black bier-cloth; nowhere the pale sinner's mien, that frightens the sinners in the realm of the God of vengeance, devised by trembling Asiatics.

Red dips the sun into the sea, without paling over the pain of parting. The ferryman, whom the now awakened might interrogate, is already far off, and the woodfolk and seafolk know nought of the world of humans, of their conceptions, their myths, and their illusions. In his stone sarcophagus the man awakened by Anadyomene's smile sits up and ponders. Turning his head, his gaze encounters a figure clad in white. He will ask her: "Am I on the Island of the Dead?" The veil falls from her at the sound of his voice. Only to one shoulder and around the hips clings the diaphanous garment. Upright she stands and proud; a woman gazing heavenwards in smiling confidence. She stretches out her arm: and from the red clouds winged servants approach. A plump little mite brings a lamp lighted from the sun's last ray, another bigger cherub carries a bright orb. At a sign of Aphrodite, Tritons drag along a monster shell. Speedily the fair torch-bearer has hastened to the cliff, the mermen raise the shell with its golden burden, the youngest sounds on the horn a melancholy farewell greeting,—and slowly the bright spirit thus disappears from sight. Another glimmer of the lamp through the rosy clouds. No parting; a separation for a few short hours only. How could the spirit of the universe ever disappear entirely from the universe? Thus there is not the atmosphere of a farewell. The merfolk rejoice, the woodfolk rejoice, sprightly mermaiden weave a wreath of rushes and water-lilies and crown the aged creator, who smilingly looks upon his creation. And behold: "it was very good."

The night descends softly upon the Island of the Dead.

One wonders whence spring those to whom she opens the volcanic rock as a last resting-place? For whom death has no terrors, to whom loneliness is no fearsome conception? Who are awakened to see Anadyomene smile, to hear the resounding soul of all creation and recognise the spirit of nature even in the clouds? To whom old and new gods seem to be alive; except the one who made human fate and human sin spring from a conscience, an organ dividing and distinguishing good and evil, that was only vouchsafed to the sons of Adam? Greece cannot be their home. Else we should see musicians, wailing women and lauders, should see a horde of relatives interring the body, sacrificing to Persephone and congregating for the Perideipnon. When would Hellenes have entrusted goat-legged woodfolk and plump denizens of the deep with guarding the dead? A Roman would have been followed by a mourning mime, and would have had a bonfire of incense and myrrh lighted on his tomb. And from a Christian land? No: never was this island touched by the breath of the Christian God, who created mankind to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Not for a despot did the Nereids weave their wreath. And he who wears it never broke down in anguish before the cross.

By means of the ladder of our historic reminiscences we cannot scale this reef; it does not reach up to the point where the riddle of this world might be solved; a world that in reality never was, and that, nevertheless, seems familiar to all good Europeans, since it was created by a poet. The poet's name is Arnold Böcklin. He was born in 1827 at Basle, and died in

1901 at Fiesole. He spoke to us only in colour and form, never explained his intention, never himself indicated the meaning of his creation. He remained true to the warning sent him by Paul Heyse as a Christmas greeting to Florence:—

> "Art is a treasure spirits shield from harm,
> Which silent faith may conjure forth from hiding;
> But those who speak must needs destroy the charm."

The Swiss are a sober people. They do not willingly venture on to the glaciers they see from below; it is a proud sight, but the ascent too steep. But rarely their spirit soars from the smooth high-road to higher flights; amid the grandeur of nature they remained small, busy people, entirely devoid of all pathos. Just as the capricious west wind, before its approach is even suspected, frequently sweeps through the cantons, so, suddenly, the quiet mind of the Swiss opens to the most capricious fancies, and the stranger observes with amazement, how these generally so sedate beings awaken to laughing, hilarious, mad life. As though the vintage season had arrived, the young wine with its regiment of heavy drunks, of which a State actuary of Zürich has said: "If it has turned out well, one's life is not safe among them, and they kick up the devil's own row; the whole town smells of young wine." Just such another ancient Swiss was Master Gottfried Keller himself. There was a time for everything with him, everything had to be kept tidily separate; first the office, then, below a bold dividing line, poetry. He never admitted the poet into the office; and when he sat in contemplative mood, and in the far away mountain

mists was painting all kinds of legends, merry and sad stories, the State actuary had to be silent. The man of Basle, who stood at the death-bed of his Zürich friend, was of a different calibre. He was as serious about his handicraft as anyone in the ancient cantons. In this he did not resemble the younger generation, who drag their artist's martyrdom through the drawing-rooms, furiously despise the Philistine, talk of nothing but atmosphere, genius, impression, and intuition, and think themselves vastly superior to the ruck; rather was he like the older school, who above all endeavour to master their handicraft. How he slaved, during many decades, with technique! Rudolf Schick's 'Diary,' edited by Herr von Tschudi, records how he felt his way from oils to distemper, was unceasingly occupied in improving his tools, how he tested all media, knew all books of recipes, Leonardo as well as Cennini, and expended as much thought on balsam of copaiba and a new method of encaustic, as on the deepest mysteries of colour and form. We hear him praise the Pompeian painters, who had influenced him so strongly. "Although artisans in their social status, they were greater painters than the later ones of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is admirable to contemplate the facility and beauty with which they knew how to order everything, so that one acted artistically on the other. Their vast knowledge of picturesque means was amazing, how by strength they obtained softness in contrast, and soft forms make hard outlines stand out all the bolder." No trace of the usual studio tittle-tattle; scarcely ever is the work of a living artist mentioned; seriously and pensively the difficulties of the handicraft are discussed. But one also reads the following: "In the composition the

starting-point must never be picturesque effect, but the subject itself, with special care to obtain a clear and natural presentment. In writing poetry one would never, surely, start from the external, metre or number of feet, but consider whether these suited the underlying idea. . . . Compared with Titian, Rembrandt is but a small talent, whose main attention was always given to technique." Such sentences reveal the man. He would never have been satisfied with the day's work of an actuary. He could only be one thing; never could do ought else but formulate the world, as he saw it with his inner eye, into shape with the wise care of a master of his handicraft. To him phantasy was not a good little soul whom, after having dutifully performed one's day's work, one invites as a guest for the festive evening hours, and whom, if duty calls, one sends home again. Gottfried Keller could write—

> "Sweet Fancy, playing like a child,
> A wreath of flowers doth weave—
> She laugheth with the wind so wild,
> She jests and makes believe,
> Anon invents some wondrous tale,
> Then sits and muses, sad and pale."

Böcklin would never have puzzled his head about the true inwardness of Fancy. He was not one of those who are creative only in a fit of fever, in a state of intoxication, and when the delights of procreation are past, gaze in amazement at the wonders of their work. What he fashioned was not a "wondrous fairy tale," but the predetermined mirrored reflection of his view of the world. He carried it with him whether he was painting, walking in solitude and silence through the country side, or sittting with boon com-

panions over a flagon. It was his very own, was solid property, not born from an emotion, or of some state of excitement, and so natural to him, so self-understood as the light of the sun, as flood and ebb of the sea. The artisan might err, go wrong in his drawing, disfigure the line of a woman's body, construct a seat for the Muse, too flimsy to bear the weight of even a human body; into the unity of the poet's world there never enters a disturbing element. There everything is as it should be, as to the eye of the Creator, when on the evening of the sixth day He saw that everything "was very good." In Böcklin's paintings there prevails the great, majestic silence of the divine Genesis. It does not appeal to every one. But whoever hears its language must surely feel: this is not an accidental atmosphere, a poet's mood, this is not a "happy thought" of some exceptionally gifted artist, —no: here speaks in form and colour a being who is compelled to speak thus, to whom Art is not a puzzling martyrdom nor a beautiful luxury, but the means to place himself into such relationship with the world, as is categorically demanded by his purpose of life. Hence the almost wicked injustice to Rembrandt, who was so complicated, so "modern" in Goethe's reproving meaning of the word, so "many-sided," always ready to paint everything that came to his brush; hence the unbounded veneration for Titian, who made of his life a work of art, associated, in a period of proud Mæcenæ and obsequiously servile vassals of the palette, as a king with kings, ever true to himself and his style. Hence, too, the intolerance which gruffly declines everything foreign to its nature. When the Spaniards exhibited in Rome canvases depicting the sick, the dying, and the dead, Böcklin said to Schick:

"Only low natures can in such subjects overlook the uncanny and the depressing, and perhaps find recompense in the clever technique or the brilliant painting. Painting should wish to depict only something elevating and beautiful, or perhaps harmless humour, but never misery." That is not spoken with Swiss sobriety; rather is it Olympian. No: this Swiss, who at the fount of Italian culture had slaked his thirst, cannot be classified with those confederates whose tongues are only occasionally loosened by the west wind and the juice fresh from the winepress, when their pulses beat faster.

Neither does the attempt to discover ancestors for him profit much. Many varieties of art must have influenced the man who studied strenuously in Basle and Zürich, in Rome, Naples, Florence, in Paris, Düsseldorf, Weimar, and Munich. In how much the Pompeians determined his development, he himself has told; what he learnt from Marées, the poor Hans of the Land of Genius, who never completed his life's work, a walk through the castle of Schleissheim will show. Schirmer was the teacher of his youth, Dreber his first friend in Apollo. With others, too, he can be easily compared: Rubens and Goya, Poussin and Claude, Preller and Feuerbach, Burne-Jones and Puvis, Klinger and Thoma, Moreau and Watts. With whom might he not be compared? Only nothing is gained by it. Except possibly a good article, if the matter were taken up by clever writers on art. But nobody believes any longer in the efficacy of a discussion; it does not cure the sick, nor makes the blind to see. It is an old plaint that the true values of a picture are scarcely ever analysed, generally not even felt by strange critics, entirely foreign to the innermost meaning of art. It may be retorted, that works of

art are not produced merely for the connoisseurs and that the amateurs must be allowed to hand on their impressions, received after modest contemplation. The finest comparisons, the longest historical excursions do not, indeed, advance the artist; neither can the attempt to penetrate to the psyche of the picture and its painter be unwelcome to him. For after all, in spite of the much-abused stock phrase, *L'art pour l'art*, much depends on the spiritual value or the sentimental meaning of a picture. They are of more importance than all technical *finesse;* and everyone strong in creating wishes to be effective. What does there remain for us, to whom the technique of painting is a sealed document, and who also probably lack the opportunities for comparison, but to follow Schopenhauer's advice, to stand before a picture as before a prince, whose address one awaits respectfully, and not to address it oneself since one would only hear one's own voice! Böcklin would have been quite satisfied with that kind of spectator, probably more contented than with some one who attempted to trace the Swiss's artistic pedigree. Nor did Böcklin ever complain, if the poet in him was praised more than the painter. He has shown us in one picture poesy and the art of painting as sisters, drawing water from one well. And he watched the revolutions of the world sufficiently long, to know that what one is, what one's personality has to offer, is always more appreciated than what one can do. He who does not believe it, has not observed long enough.

What was Böcklin to us? Why, when the news of his death arrived, did the entire German world feel bereaved, as though a saviour, a leader to the light

had been taken? These loud wailings were not meant for the painter, the great artist, whose landscapes, whose portraits in every brush-mark proclaim his strength, and who—Stauffer had early proclaimed it to the Achenbach school—painted the sea, as none before him. The tears were for the parting from the poet. But the word is poor and narrow. Who will dare to mark out boundaries for such all-embracing art, who can feel and who will undertake to say in which of its elements lay the strongest effect? Arnold Böcklin has presented mankind with a new mythology, with the dream of a new life in youthful beauty. This creation lifts him above the horde of the most efficient workers, the Museless Menzels, into the pure realm of him, who to us is not the poet of Werther, of Iphigenia, of Faust, but Goethe, the man of his achievements. Menzel's Prussian pictures, his subtle goblin arts, which most aptly express the rationalism of North-Eastern Germany, will long be held up to praise. Whoever mentions Böcklin does not think of his individual pictures, scattered all over the world, and most of which are known only from reproductions, but of the creator of a new vision, of the man who dug the deepest well of nature's phantasy out of the rubbish of thousands of years. They scoffed at him. Gladly would the priests of all confessions, those of materialism as well, have excommunicated him. Like no other painter since the Renaissance he captured the people's hearts.

That he was not a reliable Christian churchman, the sanctimonious scented immediately. He has painted scenes from the cycle of Christian ideas. A penitent on his knees on the slope before the cross. But the main feature is the wild rocky ravine, that

seems to mock at the fears of the cringing earthworm. A hermit, whose whole body seems to be trembling in a pious feeling of devout abandonment. But this ecstasy was not caused by the Saint on the wall of the cell, but by Saint Cecilia: the old monk is an artist, and to the song of his violin are listening the little angels, who thereby, perhaps, may be led astray. A Saint Anthony preaching to the fishes. He would, being a crown of creation, appear superior, but has a very stupid expression. The fishes take him for a fool, and the largest and most important, with a sneering lip and upturned eyeball, seems to be calling to the priest at the edge of the watery desert: you can preach for a long time before you tempt us into your net. And whilst the Gospel is being proclaimed above, you see below big and fat fishes catching and devouring the smaller and thinner ones, as anterior to the teachings of Christianity. Böcklin has also painted a Pieta. Across the dead body of the Galilean the mother has thrown herself in passionate grief. Only her hands are visible; one with extended fingers clasps the son's upper arm, the other burrows, seeking a trace of warm life, among the hair of the crucified. Not even the face is visible; a dark-blue mantle covers it. And yet the observer feels the immense, the inconsolable grief of the veiled woman. But behind her the heaven opens. Sainted boys look down upon the human misery, and one of them, the oldest, stretches as far as he can, without overbalancing out of the clouds, his arm towards the weeping woman, as though he would pluck at her garment and whisper: "Gaze this way, good woman, here lives thy son, who only departed the earthly life." A wonderful picture, simple, in spite of the bright colouring, and

conceived as in the hour of pain of holiest humanity; but it would not be suitable as a church decoration. And still less Böcklin's Almighty, who shows the newly created Adam over the earth. That is not the Lord Zebaoth, the mighty leader of warlike heavenly hosts, nor the sinister, threatening Jehovah, who visits vengefully on the sons the sins of the fathers, but the God of the first chapters of Genesis, a good, bright, and kindly looking man, who manifestly derives the greatest pleasure from his six days' work, and is now anxious to safeguard him, whom he placed on his legs on the last day of creation, against danger and hardship. He does not seem quite sure in the matter. This is not surprising; for this Adam does not look as though he were fitted to hold his own between God and the animal kingdom, to be the supreme judge of everything living on earth. That is not the strong Adam, bursting with vital force, whom one sees in old pictures. It is a miserable, boyish, unripe being, that seems to have been called into life too soon, does not yet know how to use its naked limbs, and blinks shyly into the strange world in an almost comical, embarrassed posture. Did the Creator not succeed entirely in his first attempt? Was the clay he used too soft? And shall renewed sculptor's efforts gradually evolve the type that the good God desires for his ends, that is able to multiply and replenish the earth, and to subdue it, to be a bulwark against the violent deeds of the strong and to protect weakness? The painting reveals a mind open to childlike faith in miracles, but would not fit into the cathedral of any recognised form of ritual. It rather recalls Renan, who under a mild scepticism, as the beating heart under a cuticle, concealed a plentiful

remnant of ineradicable piety and, according to Nietzsche's malicious dictum, knew how to adore in a manner dangerous to life. And yet another Frenchman is recalled by these Germanic legendary pictures. Taine, who said that between a beech grove in the park of Versailles, a philosophical *sequitur* of Malebranche, an axiom for writing poetry of Boileau, a law of debentures of Colbert, and reflection on the kingdom of God of Bossuet, a distinct connection could be traced by the penetrating eye, since all these, apparently so divergent, manifestations of conscious endeavour had sprung from a collective mood, common to all living contemporaneously. Böcklin need never have heard of Condillac and Saint Hilaire, of Darwin and Comte; in the boundless realm of his glittering phantasy he seems far distant from the positivists' *terra firma.* And yet the invisible, mysterious choir, of which the old poets whispered, the resounding choir of the powers which lend an imprint to an era, wafted stray notes into his ear. When his creative mind had gained man's strength, this mood was no longer a pious one, no longer anthropocentric. One could notice it; these pictures could only have been painted in the nineteenth century, at a period of naturalistic views of the world and a developed technique, from which Böcklin's craving for heights hoped for the solution of the flying problem. Titian, too, whom he admired so sincerely, found no Christian atmosphere for his Magdalena and Laurentius; he was too strong, too much the *principe* with Tory morals, to be able to listen reverently to a gospel preached to the weak. The Nazarene ideal he replaced by the Hellenic, and on his canvas Hellenism became again "Moderation,

Nobility, Clearness," as later on Schiller demanded it. With such a makeshift Böcklin would not have been satisfied. He had drunk deep of Hellenic beauty, had assisted in the celebration of the great Life's Festival in the temple of the Amathusian goddess, yet he had not become a Greek, but remained a child of the modern world, that without supernatural intermediaries seeks to explain the origin of its existence. In this world he seemed a lordly stranger, and still he was, even he, her son. His muse was no Grecian, his Mary no Christian figure. Contemplating the picture of his Pieta we feel the grief of the bereaved mother, but we do not believe that this mother gave birth to a God. The fishes, to whom his Anthony preaches, are procreated of the same material as he who thinks himself a saint. His mermaidens resemble little Italian lasses to a nicety, with the exception of the modern way of doing the hair. Call them by any name from Hellas: Aphrodite, Pan, Nereids, Tritons; with the sunken world of the Olympian Gods they have only what springs from imperishable nature in common. The artist, who for decades was planning a flying-machine, was no Icarus, and yet no devout Christian, to whom all temporal existence means but a purifying for a cleaner life, and who for that very reason would never dare presume on such impudent endeavour. Over him not Pæstum, not Golgotha had any power, no Phœbus and no Galilean. He sang to another master.

He has shown him to us; among clouds, like, for thousands of years past, every prophet has shown his God. A mountain-chain that to the human eye seems inaccessible. Half way up the giant's back a forest of olives, the silvery foliage of which is slashed by

the whip of the storm. Higher up the wood ceases; only naked rock and tattered clouds, chased by the wind's fury. And on the very top, on the highest point of the brownish rock, close under the heavy, gilt frame, a fettered body. Clouds chase above it. Torrents rush down from under it, rush from the rock into the blue sea, which with white foam churns around the mountain island. Are the breakers ascending to wash the captive from the rocky peak, and when the whirling waters have closed over the reef, will they celebrate amidst the howling of the storm the remarriage of the elements divorced æons ago? Is it Odin's son lying up there in the merciless clutch of winter? We picture Baldur more tender, more springlike. He on the lofty mountain ridge resembles more a Hercules. What a giant he must be to have such powerful effect at such a height! It seems as though the weight of his body were pressing the masses of rock down on the water's surface, as though for the dimensions of such gigantic limbs there was no room even across the width of this mountain ridge. If the man were to arise and stand up to fight, he would be more powerful than the storm, than the flood, than the rock. But he cannot rise. Hand and foot he is fettered, and in mute impotence he watches the play of the forces of nature. . . . The master, who did not himself care to christen the children of his art, had this called Prometheus. A name is sound and smoke. The world of Æschylus must not be thought of; it is rather Shelley's bright light-giving creation, who knew of nothing better to say in posthumous praise of a man, than the words: "He was made one with nature." That is it. He who lies there on high, listening to the roar of the breakers,

is ever-almighty Nature's natural child, a part of her strength, like the wave, the rock, the cloudy mist, the olive-tree's fading leaf. From no hearth of the gods did he steal the fire, and no bird of the heavens hacks a meal from his liver. In life's great stream he has fought the elements, forced them into his service for a while, and was then dethroned again by them. Now he is lying in chains on the rude stone, he who would play at being master, has again to feel himself the servant, is learning to be sensible of the limitations of will and of the human race, and wind and wave thunder in his ear, as so often to one obsessed by the Hybris. So far thou mayest go and never farther! Here is the boundary of thy human entity!

What signifies the eagle's sharp beak, compared with the humiliating torture of such comprehension?

For Böcklin it was no torture. He once painted himself, listening to the dirge, that grinning Death fiddles to him. A human being who in the meridian of life is being reminded of the limits of the human race. Quiet, pleasantly pensive, he listens to the strange air; and when the boneman has finished fiddling, the artist will say: "Death? Yes; I know. We must die like the falling leaf in the late autumn, like the lion and the lamb, like everything that crawls and flies, grows and has its birth in the lap of the earth. Have never thought myself better than other growth of the soil, never regarded myself as a little coronet of creation. Let me paint undisturbed! And when the time comes, I will follow without quaking. A part of the part that we were remains, as manure for a fresh crop." Yet other pictures stand out in

glowing colours. A merman is playing the harp. A fat, ugly fellow; but in his roomy eye there is true devotion. A girl, half maiden half fish, peers over the fat one's shoulder to follow the play of his fingers on the strings, and is singing lustily. Three other girls are also singing with especial fervour, a somewhat ripe beauty, lying on her back and nestling voluptuously against the harpist's hanging paunch, whilst in the background two hideous monsters are singing the chorus. Or: from a white castle by the sea there approaches a procession. Red-coated riders on white steeds. The horses are trotting through long, pale-green grass; whither? From the golden trumpets of the horsemen a melody ascends in loud peals to the skies; for whose pleasure, in whose honour? And to whom is homage done, in another picture, by the naiads singing, whilst a centaur, bedecked with garlands of white roses, carries the most beautiful woman through the waves? To whom sing all these strange people? They do not appear immortal. But they are alive, glad of the swelling fulness of motherly Nature, and praising with merry, yet pious chorals, replete with happy wellbeing, the glory of the universe. . . . Ruskin distinguished two roads to art; the one, he opined, is chosen by artists who have a truth to proclaim; on the other you seek for the fine line, the resounding charm of colour. Böcklin has shown that the two paths are only divided by a paper partition. How often may he not have been stimulated by the charm of colour, by some atmospheric vision! And yet he was the very one who proclaimed a truth. He found the heavens empty, the old faith used up; nature, hated by man's envy, like some wild animal defying its trainer, and despised by man's

arrogance. And withal a dull sound of voices around, a whispering from the room with the child-bed, where a new view of the world has just been born from the womb of Europa. He became a creator; he succeeded in what Goethe demanded to see accomplished by his heroes: the wedding of Germanic and Hellenic culture. He did not dig decayed ruins of a vanished past from the *débris*. Even the ancients did not obtain their mystic conceptions ready-made from philologists and antiquarians. Their phantasy, too, was made fruitful by man's endeavour to explain unto himself the character of his own entity and the dark world of riddles. If this process is repeated in a modern's soul, the birth of a new faith is assured; and if such a soul is that of a great artist, it forces the beholder under its sway. He stands and marvels. That is not Hellas. The woman, displaying her salmon-coloured limbs on the cliff, is not Horace's *mulier formosa superne*. Here reigns a new morphology, which was bound to excite the professorial ire of Dubois-Reymond. Here the elements sing, rejoice, mourn, and caress. And in all is what we arrogantly call humanity, and in all humans there is of the elements a part. How closely man is related to the animal, we behold here, are reminded of Ibsen's sculptor, striving beyond his power, who was also named Arnold, and fashioned animals' heads for humans, and we learn to conceive, how in millions of years of gradual development the genus *homo sapiens* came into being, and gave form after its own image to the forces mysteriously weaving around. This is not Hellas. Such water does not flow in the bed of the Peneios, the centaur with the shining bronzed back and white roses in his grey hair is not called Chiron, in these holy

groves no sacrifices are made to Pallas Athene. The artist who created these marvels stood untrammelled on his own ground, knew of no thunderer Zeus, asked not for advice in Delphi. He gave us the Picture Bible of a natural history of the creation. And he remained in continuous work. The souls of all moderns became overcrowded, sought a new ideal, some satisfying myth, and found naught but dead theory which hid from them life's golden tree behind dusty folios. Arnold Böcklin rescued the festive swing of the Hellenic conception of life into the world barren of gods. He did not allow his circles to be interfered with, and, whether the sun shone outside or the storm swept his mountain homeland, he remained true to himself. Ariosto was the well-read man's favourite. Him he accompanied to Orlando and Angelica, him he followed joyfully to quiet islands, into lonely valleys, to gracefully natural, not in the least prudish, sensual pleasures and never-fading pleasantry. And it is a happy chance that what Goethe's Antonio praises in the work of Ariosto, whose forehead he sees adorned with bright flowers by Leonore, is even more applicable to his Basle admirer than to Ferrara's *protégé*:—

"As Nature folds in her rich mantle green
The kindly bosom of the fruitful earth,
He with Imagination's flowery robe
Clothes all that makes mankind beloved of men,
Yea, all that we in rev'rend honour hold.
Rare birds float through the air in poisèd flight,
Strange herds in meadow and in thicket browse,
Where Mischief 'mid the leaves half-hidden lurks;
Anon grave Wisdom from a golden cloud
In words sublime some lofty thought enshrines,
While Madness shrieks with well-attunèd cries,
And seems, but only seems, to rage unchecked,
In measured cadences throughout sustained."

When Ariosto had read his epic of the raving Roland to his employer and patron, the Cardinal d'Este, the philistine prelate could only exclaim: "My good Lodovico, where on earth did get all those wheezes and filthy stories?" How often has the poet Böcklin heard a similar question! And his employer, his judge, was not a Mæcenas, but the public's Majesty.

Now he is admired. When the ferryman pushed off the boat carrying the dead body to the shore of the island of cypresses, the people rushed to the spot. There was no uproar as on the death of one of the earth's great, a crowned tragedian or some old woman, who to the human race meant nothing more than a name and a purple speck on the horizon. But through the best heads passed the thought: We have lost a saviour from everyday misery and disgust of life. And already to-day it may be predicted that a Homeric fate is decreed for Böcklin. Yes, will be said in the fourth millennium by the historically cultured, there was one who painted all kinds of fabulous visions, a pan-believer and pantheist, who hoped the human race would soon be able to venture flight into the heights of heaven, and sought for the means to satisfy such yearnings. First they mocked, then they idolised him. And now he is credited with this abundance of visions, he alone, just as once blind Homer was credited with the entire mythology of the Greeks. What folly! Is it possible that a human being, and had he been of all times the mightiest lyrist, could have constructed this cosmos so artistically? Could he thus have seen the sea, the forest, gloomy ravines and bright valleys, could he have dreamt of heroes of light

and monsters, of angels and dragons, could he have pointed out the trace of an origin in gods, humans, and animals, could he have shown for all time how life and legend are unfolded, further on high or lower down, according to the onlooker's point of view? No; all this could not have been created by one single being, only by the genius of an entire epoch. . . . How the merfolk will laugh at such speech! Human bodies decay, human names are blown into oblivion by the wind. But a part of the part we were, remains and manures the soil for a fresh harvest.

CHARLOTTE WOLTER

Charlotte Wolter, famous actress (*born* March 1, 1834, in Cologne; *died* June 14, 1897, at Hirtzing, near Vienna). She was married to Count Karl O'Sullivan de Grasse, who died in 1888. She made her *début* at the age of fifteen in Pest; and since 1862 she was a member of the Hofburg Theater Company in Vienna.

CHARLOTTE WOLTER

We had come from Santa Cruz, the port of the sleeping fairy isle of Teneriffe. The crossing had been rough, the tiny, now only half-laden vessel had pitched and rolled most unpleasantly, and even the best sailors among the passengers were glad when at length Madeira's wooded heights appeared on the sunlit horizon. It was, of course, still a considerable distance to Hamburg, but for a few short hours at least we could once more step on *terra firma*. Only for a few short hours; so soon as the sweet wine had been shipped at Funchal, the voyage was to be continued immediately. Thus there was no time to explore the island of the consumptives, or even to glide on an ox-sleigh into the forest region, the wonder-wilderness of which the glib Portuguese knows so well to depict. We could gather but a fleeting impression, a powerful sensation, however, the memory of which will never be wiped out. A gloriously brilliant island with bright flowering gardens, in close proximity to unmistakable signs of volcanic activity; plenty of sun, mighty palm-trees, bananas in profusion, the excited ocean in the foreground, and in the background a wooded mountain

ridge of almost northern, dismal severity. A broiling island rising from the ocean between Europe and Africa. A grape country, the wine of which, almost never perfectly pure, soon stirs the blood into commotion, . . . and amid these glorious sunny surroundings, pale figures, shivering and coughing, who have long carried the seed of death,—dying humanity from all zones. Such, since then, remains to me the picture of Madeira. Other peculiarities of the fruitful isle did not strike me. This picture, indelibly engraven in my memory, is certainly very incomplete, very defective, and probably not even a good likeness in its main features. But is it not nearly always so? How rarely does the limited human mind succeed in comprehending all sides of a thing with its roving eye; how rarely do we see the many-coloured nature of even only one, who is near to us, in its entirety, in its glittering fulness and complexity. We must be content if one side, that nearest to our own sensitive centre of vision, impresses itself on our memory and gives us the opportunity retrospectively to form an opinion of the whole from the part.

This impression came back to me when I heard of the death of Frau Charlotte Wolter. It was much the same case with the great actress, as with the wooded island in the ocean. I do not know all sides of her character, and have scarcely retained more than an impression, the colours of which are not faded, but which may be wrong or at least defective in outline. I have not seen Frau Wolter very often on the stage, and not at all during the past few years. She no longer played in Berlin, since fresh geniuses are discovered here annually; she probably did not care to be told by silly youngsters that she

had become rusty iron. She came to Parvenupolis to find out for herself the meaning of the "new movement," or the "new style," about which so much is talked, but hers was the same verdict as that of other experienced people; she did not find it, in spite of the most diligent search, and recounted later, that she had seen good and bad performances, but had nowhere espied the fabulous "new" thing. In those days her severely classic head was often to be seen in one of the boxes, and one could imagine her feelings in watching the loose and undisciplined acting, which in Berlin is accounted the most modern, and therefore the highest form of art. When I saw her on the boards for the first time, I was still very young and intensely interested in all matters theatrical, but already sufficiently critical coolly to condemn Frau Ziegler's Judith and Herr Barnay's Uriel. And on reviewing my early impressions it seems as though my youthful mind had then absorbed the subsequently unalterable forms of Phædra, Messalina, Orsina, Lady Macbeth, and Hebbel's Mary Magdalen. And now I comprehend why, in speaking about Frau Wolter, the few hours I spent on Madeira instinctively came back to my mind. In the presence, too, of the *tragédienne*, the first and the last, whom I saw in full possession of her powers, I felt as in a strange world, in view of a broiling island, rising between two zones, between Europe and Africa, and peopled by suffering, dying humanity. The luxurious, almost tropical wealth of her genius, too, sprang from volcanic soil, and behind the southern splendour of Phædra and Messalina there extends threatening the wild northland forest, which in the hour of fate advances towards Macbeth's royal castle. . . .

Charlotte Wolter resembled the spirit of tragedy. A dark cameo head, which, even when smiling seductively, remained black and forbidding, even as the mask of Melpomene. A serious, almost gloomy eye, that could coax and gleam, mock and rejoice, attract and scorch, but was surest of its effect when it was allowed to threaten, to blaze in sudden lightning, to destroy. A metallic voice of 'cello timbre, fascinating by its pure material charm, a dark voice suited to the dark head, which revelled in its own euphony and frequently accompanied the poets' words with curiously monotonous melodies. Her method of delivery was copied, and for decades a furious "Wolterising" raged on the German stages; unfortunately the personality, the overflowing genius of this woman, could not be copied by monkey talent. She was not big, not of the Valkyrian proportions to which the giant guard of German heroines since the days of Ziegler has accustomed us, and which robs the beautiful and evil women of our tragic poetry of all womanliness; but she possessed an inner bigness, which raises even Cleopatra and Messalina above the ruck of the ordinary street wanton, and enabled her to be Thusnelda, Kriemhilda, the Queen of Messina and the Mother of the Maccabeans. Adelaide Ristori, from whom she learned much, was even smaller in body and had yet accomplished in heart the greatest, the most magnificent effects. Both were mistresses of pose, but both aimed at character rather than beauty in line; as Ristori made of Medea a wild, barbarous, Colchian woman, whose character stood out sombre against the light of Hellenic life, so Charlotte Wolter impersonated the wife of Claudius, not as a well-mannered Empress,

but as a voluptuous woman with a serpent's winding sinuosity. But even in this *rôle*, which cannot be played by anyone else without immediately exciting a feeling of contemptuous disgust, her genius guarded her against falling into the malodorous morass of the street wanton; the passion of this Messalina was too powerful to be measured by an ordinary gauge; and this great whirling passion did not altogether have its roots in animal instincts. The debauched woman was as sensitive as a chaste maiden embracing the Ephebe in the temple of Venus, and suffered like a wingless goddess of love hurled into the abyss, when she crept to the body of her last lover, with the bacchante's vine leaves in her hair, hesitating, as though on her way to the scaffold. That Marcus had been her last lover, the last smile in a ruined life; in this Charlotte Wolter sought and found the tragedy of this unclean, distorted figure. Perhaps she did not need to seek; the probing spirit, it is said, was never very strongly developed in her, nor did she ever belong to the abominable horde of thinking artists; her instinct scented what her brain did not clearly recognise, and even drove her unconsciously to the one, the lowest point, from which the sum of endeavour, which is called the character, can be gauged and recreated. . . . Thus in her impersonation Hebbel's Clara became the true daughter of the porcupinish Master Anton, an unbending virago, who, with fear inspiring life already palpitating within her womb, still in virgin modesty radiates the bristles inherited from the father. Her Phædra, too, even in the palace at Athens still remained Ariadne's sister, who had early become acquainted with faithlessness and deceit, and had never believed in

the duty of being faithful for life. Thus she built up on the cunningly devised madness of the forsaken woman the inwardly decayed figure of the Countess Orsina, around which played in dark-red splendour, the yellow, flickering lights of insanity.

Anything quite clean and anything very small seemed to me to be beyond the boundaries of her performance. She was too sensuous, too vehement in every emotion for the *rôle* of Iphigenia; too powerful, too commanding for the *dame aux camélias*. By the grace of her great art, she was able to appear as Victrix on Tauris as well as in Paris, but her real forte lay in another direction. I saw her as Marguerite Gautier. She was beautiful, passionate, affecting, but lacked the charm of decay, the charm of the cocotte, delicate in health, which made Sarah Bernhardt's impersonation of this character so unique a performance, and she was too robust to make anyone believe that for years back she had shared *mensam et torum* with worm-eaten barons and counts; the tragic Muse should never be taken into a *cabinet particulier*, Melpomene is not paid a shirt-tax. In Dumas the French woman beat the German; Racine gave the German woman a triumph over the foreign conquering heroine. Sarah's Phædra is charming, wholly suited in her refined softness to the style of Racine, and enchants our ear with the jubilant and sobbing notes of a voice, that seems forged of gold and diamonds; but she lacks the intensity, the panting fever-heat of Charlotte Wolter, who carried us in a demon's grip from Racine's pleasant undulating landscape to the glaciers of the great tragedians. . . . Here at last, where others could no longer breathe, she felt

thoroughly herself and at ease, distended the nostrils, which in the valley had twitched nervously, and ravenously inhaled the pure air of the heights. And as she stood there on high in victorious beauty on a giddy ledge, the onlooker, gazing upward in amazement, no longer heeded her defects, the dialect in her language, never entirely absent, was no longer noticed, nor the exaggerated intensity of her tigress-like mien and the sometimes capricious arbitrariness of her acting,—then a mighty power of nature would spend itself, magnificent, blessing and blessed, in sweeping storms. Suddenly there would blow up to the iciest height of the glacier's summit a sirocco blast, and in the sultry stillness the listener's blood would be frozen. But on high, illumined by the last light of yellow lightning, she remained standing erect, the terrible one, the lovely one, wrapped only in her veil, the only garment she never cared to lay aside. Her veil was part of herself, she folded it around all her figures: and this thin transparent covering separated the *tragédienne's* creations, as does a fine silvery mist, from the common actuality of things, and gave them, above the misty valley of the *bourgeoisie*, the aristocratic right of existence in the world of poesy.

. . . Eleonora Duse, the kitten-like, sinuous *virtuosa* of naturalness saw the lonely giant actress one night standing on high, heard the Wolter slogan, and with terrified gaze followed Macbeth's ghostly consort through the deserted halls of the blood-stained Scottish castle. On the following day the dainty Italian called on the sinewy woman and told her many pretty things; but when Charlotte Wolter asked her whether she had ever played Lady Mac-

beth, a shudder passed down the tired limbs of *la Duse*, she hastily shook her pale head and wrapped herself more tightly in her soft fur cloak. The little bundle of nerves realised that she had before her an uncannily gifted one,—one of those who sweep across the globe like an elemental force, become great sinners or great *tragédiennes*, or both, and with a forbidding look for a while hold even death at bay.

MENZEL

Adolf Menzel (*born* December 8, 1815, in Breslau ; *died* February 9, 1905, in Berlin). At the age of fifteen he came to Berlin, where he attended the Academy of Arts. Between 1839 and 1842 he completed 400 illustrations for Kugler's 'History of Frederick the Great'; the next six years were occupied in drawing 200 illustrations for an *édition de luxe* of Frederick the Great's works to the order of King Frederick William IV., who presented the copies to his friends. The next fifteen years were devoted to study, which resulted in the publication in 1857 of 600 coloured lithographs in 'The Army of Frederick the Great and its Uniforms,' of which only thirty copies were printed, each in three volumes, at 530 Thaler (about £80). On the occasion of his seventieth birthday he founded a scholarship of £40 per annum for students at the Berlin Academy ; on his eightieth birthday the Emperor William II. made him Privy Councillor, with the title of Excellency, and the town of Berlin conferred on him the honorary citizenship of the capital. Three years later he was elected a Knight of the Order of the Black Eagle, which carries with it the personal prefix " von."

MENZEL

Among Goethe's political *dicta* there is one, to the mildly mocking wisdom of which a serious mind will often turn for consolation, and may sometimes find it. "Whether a nation can become mature is a curious question. I should answer 'Yes,' if all men could be born thirty years old. But as youth will ever be forward with its speech and old age sparing of the word, the really mature man is always squeezed in between the two, and must help and extricate himself in a curious manner." In much the same strain, only from a harder heart, the poet's Alba says to Count Egmont: "Believe me, a people does not grow old, nor wise; a people always remains childish." Not believing which, leads to Egmont's doom. Even in the dungeon his fevered imagination sees the people gather and save the old friend with united force, sees himself stepping forth into the freedom of the dawn across the battered walls: and the people, on whose well-meant insistance he counts, shrink from his name, when summoned to liberating action by the maiden's feeble voice. A people always remains childish. Our poet wanted a distinction drawn between race and people. "The former always

pronounces the same thing, is sensible, constant, pure and true. The latter, from sheer impetuousness, never know what they do want. And in this sense the law should and can be the expressed will of the race, a will never expressed by the multitude, but heard by the sensible, and which the sensible know how to satisfy, and which the good satisfy with pleasure." To hear it to-day is no longer quite so easy. The people are so noisy and loud, the newspaper writer baits their childish instinct with such sly skill, that the grown-up will of the race can scarcely obtain for itself a hearing. When not at work, or satisfying its stomach, its vanity, its sexual desires, the people gaze into the picture-book. There the rich man is a miser and sweater, every poor man a noble hero. There kings wear crowns, and even he who dares to revile them, does it in the key of a lackey irritated to fury. Parades and battles are to be seen there, marriages and funerals, spectacles of every kind; naturally, too, all the horrors that have happened or might have happened anywhere in the world. And the reading-matter tells what the onlooker should think of the pictured people and events. That everything on this earth is good or bad, snow-white or pitch-black. (You must not reveal, that there exist complementary colours; that white light can become coloured and that no lighted object can show colours, that were not already present in the incoming light.) Tells whom to love and whom to hate, where admiration and where contempt are more or less in place. Nothing of the diversities of zones and times, cultures and eras; it sounds ever yet as though we lived in the undifferentiated six days' toil of our Garden God. Whoever studies his own interests, or who,

with Haeckel, discovers in the most lofty actions traces of egoism, is a rascal and does not belong to the community of the pure. Not all are believers in the primer; frequently one hears complaints about the silly child's book. Not too loud, however. The dissatisfied is silent in the market-place, is careful to avoid the noisy street, to avoid being jammed in between the disheartened and the forward, and represses the will into the most secret compartment of his being. Abroad the troublesome monitor would only be met with sneers and abuse. That fellow? With him a matter of pleasurable conceit; perhaps, too, it advances him in his business, if he is continually saying something different from the chorus of the Know-alls, standardised as "knowing" by the authorities. And by such an one, ye simpletons, you allow yourselves to be cozened out of a firm certainty? Such alarms are suited to the acoustics of the nursery. More especially the German ones, that have their special optical and acoustic laws, and their own rules for games and morals. Unsophisticated children are taught by instinct what is for their good and what to their hurt; we pride ourselves on not troubling about profit and loss in the discussion of public affairs. Elsewhere, too, they have stupid and bad newspapers; we, however, have only a primer press that taboos all psychology, and paints all people either white or black. Nowhere else is so much chattering done, time wasted so fruitlessly as with us. The matured man has to get on and through as best he may; and the race will make itself heard when its life is in danger. The people, however, who know so well how to be thrifty, how to discover new commercial values, how to secure their private profit,

seem to be perfectly comfortable in childishly dabbling in politics, and even to-day quite incapable of serious discussion of public events.

Did you read what was printed after the death of Adolf Menzel? The mean, rubbishy anecdotes, and the silly fable, that in Berlin every one had known the painter, and on the day of his funeral on every face could be read the knowledge of the loss "that the entire world of art and culture had suffered by the death of the genius"? That such a statement could be believed seems almost impossible. Hundreds of times have we seen the painter seated in Frederich's wine-bar, or in Josty's confectionery, and were amazed that this dwarf, whose personal abnormity was sure to strike every one, was not known to more of the frequenters. Of his death less was spoken than about the Countess Montignoso's latest adventure. Must lies continually be told? Adolf Menzel lived to have the satisfaction ere night fell of knowing that the value of his bright creations was recognised and admired far beyond the confines of the Fatherland. He was spared the fate of the artist whose "earthly pilgrimage" he described in a cycle of pen-and-ink sketches, at the age of eighteen, and below the last folio are the words: "The tree, indeed, has fallen, but only now, lying on the ground, can one appreciate the full beauty of its wealth of fruit, and above it rises brightly the luminary of the day." His contemporaries have done so much for Menzel that scarcely anything remains for posterity to do. His king, who saw in him the painter of Fritz and Wilhelm, of their courts and

their army of Prussia, sedulously honoured the living, and provided a funeral ceremony for the dead, such as on the soil of the March is usually only accorded to princes and field-marshals; probably never, since Velasquez was entombed, has an Emperor followed on foot the coffin of an artist. And yet it was not a relationship like that between Charles and Titian; and Berlin has not become desolate by Menzel's death, as once did Venice by Titian's. The Imperial capital, too, "celebrated" the octogenarian Menzel in its way, and placed laudatory orations in fat bundles on the grave of its freeman *honoris causa;* but it was nothing but verbiage. Nine years ago Theodor Fontane wrote to me saying that in his articles for the 'Zukunft' he had "not expatiated much on Menzel's art, but had said something about the man, who probably is greater still than the artist; a really magnificent little chap. The dreadful celebrations and laudations reflect on Berlin, always miserably terminating its festivals, and not on the little great man. There are at least three good passages in my article, whereas in all the other Menzel articles together I have never yet found three good passages. Rubbish, senseless and witless, mostly measured out by the yard." Since then we have advanced still further. In two or three necrologies some sound things, even some clever things, were said. But the sum total, the massed choir, whose voices overtopped everything; and after the first roar the dog's trot of the pack, uncoupled for the chase of anecdotes: the quiet friends of Menzel felt hot and cold. The greatest painter of the century. Of decisive importance to all posterity. The Prussian painter prince. None stood closer to the king, yet his heart beat for the

people. And the people loved, every nursemaid and every errand-boy knew him, and respectfully made way for him. And his liberality, his defiant artist's pride, his glorious rudeness. And so forth. Nowhere an attempt at differentiation, an endeavour to draw boundary lines, and to show within such limits a personal entity. For what purpose? Whoever dies after a long life of fame must lie in state. Away with the wrinkles, the marks of a tired, harassed, and aggrieved human being; let grease-paint cover the spots made by the ploughshare of time. Wash the body, embalm, scent, and dress it, stuff the cheeks to make them appear plump; and if the lip falls in, put in false teeth, that the jaw may not spoil the ornamental picture. *De mortuis nil nisi bene.* A pity that a few feet in length could not be pasted on to little Menzel. But he is laid low, never more to get up; so one does not notice it. Do you really still recognise him? Does he not almost resemble, under paper garlands and pomp, the Titan, about whom we blubbered yesterday? . . . What matter? It is a handsome corpse.

De mortuis nil nisi bene (not *bonum*): Chilo's admonition, not to speak disrespectfully of the dead, was falsified into the advice of the primer, to say of the dead nothing but good. Did Menzel himself act thus? Has his pencil, his brush, shown us spotless heroes? Look at his Fritz, his Wilhelm, the whole crowd of his human beings, from Voltaire to the Upper Silesian iron-ore miners: they all stand with firm legs on our earth and do not peer behind the clouds; they all are human, and are not ashamed to appear almost too human. Even the little Jesus, on the curious picture, that has almost the effect of a

caricatured myth, in spite of the shimmering halo, is a precocious Jew boy of flesh and bone. The little magician, who could say amiable things even to the *raconteur* Auerbach, although the sentimental subtlety of that wit, disguised as a peasant, must have been intolerable to him (he could thus not really have been so very rude), would probably have preferred to side with Voltaire, who once wrote: *On doit des égards aux vivants; on ne doit aux morts que la vérité.* He would probably also have protested even against any obligation to *égards.* And this little Cyclops, this true son of Gaea, is now to be placed in the children's pantheon? The man who, like the other Prussian of the year 1815, with all faults and without any retouching, can be exhibited in the brightest light?

The problem Menzel could only be solved by an intimate acquaintance with the man. To me he always seemed an uncanny riddle. A gigantic skull on a dwarf's body. The head of a high-school Professor, who has learnt to look black for fear the schoolboys should not show proper respect to the little mite. When he removed his spectacles, the head, with a straight-cut fringe of hair over the forehead, was that of some old artisan. Nothing artistic; only strikingly delicate hands. The entire little man of practically no period; clothe him in a guild smock, the coat of a council scrivener, and he fits into the period of early German municipal glory. Not yet an old man in walk and carriage, and yet a man whom you could never picture as young with a sweetheart in the boisterous years of rising sap; who, when you saw him again, lustres later, appeared un-

changed, unchangeable. Added to this a fabulous capacity, defying all difficulties, and a sharp-edged personality, that, however, is lacking in the finishing charm, that is without passion, and frequently gives the onlooker a cold shiver of admiration. In his visible entity the most extraordinary contrast. You can see the dwarf, delicate in spite of firm sinews, the octogenarian, devour hastily at night helpings that would satisfy a sturdy ploughman; see his Excellency, who is so proud of rank and title, at midnight fast asleep at the table of some café among race-course sharps and ladies of easy virtue. You can hear that the Knight of the Black Eagle, who misses no Court festivity, will huddle at home without a fire, wrapped in flannel blankets, on a step-ladder, like a painter on a new building. That he forced his left hand by rigid training to serve him as surely and punctually as the right; that he paints with both hands. A painter, to whom the nude human body offers no temptation; who never was in Italy, and when he eventually started for there, turned back at Verona, never saw the treasures that the ancients of the Renaissance had accumulated under that sky. . . . A human being, like others, or a gnome, who, since there is nothing much to see there below, prefers to live here?

I am not competent to judge whether he was the greatest painter of the century; moreover, it is a matter of indifference. All I know is that he was not like what he was made to appear, when lying in state. Not prince of painters, not the friend of his princes, nor yet the obstinate, who always spoke the harshest word and disdained weak compromises. Paul the Third wrote to Titian from the Vatican

rather differently, than did William the Second to Menzel. The Silesian never associated with potentates as did the robust Rubens with Isabella, the pale grandseigneur Van Dyck with Charles the First, or best of all, Velasquez, in life and art *facile princeps*, with his Philip. The king of the Venetian cinquecento lived like a prince, never twitching an eyelid when the fifth Charles, *Imperator et Rex*, picked up the paint-brush he had dropped. Princely in his way Lenbach had lived. That did not suit Menzel. He felt warm only in narrow surroundings. For decades he might have sat in the limelight, could have earned as much money as he liked; his old sketch-books (which, according to von Angeli, are supposed to contain a mine of artistic marvels) would easily have fetched tens of thousands. But to play the *artiste parvenu?* To keep carriages and horses, have an open house, just to show what one can do, to feed a hundred bores on truffles and caviare? Dreadful. He remained in the Sigismundstrasse and appeased his appetite at an adjacent hostelry. When his king summoned him he was there. A piece of luck for the Hohenzollern that they found him. He was their man; really more the man of William the First, not so much of Friedrich, who needed theatrical setting and limelight. And curiously enough it was Menzel who de-theatralised the historical picture. Now he was there, a "pride of the Nation," and had compelled the world to view the Fritzian era through his eyes: so now he had to be honoured. More still than Anton von Werner, Pape, Saltzmann, and the Buonarottis of the dolls' avenue. His Excellency (like Theodor Möller *triumphans*). The Black Eagle (like Count Görtz-Schlitz for a superfluous Coligny). Really pretty

and uncommon (though not beautiful from the artist's point of view) was the Fritzian Menzel Festival in Sanssouci and the pomp of the funeral. Is it not curious that Menzel remained so silent on his very own particular domain, never opposed the Imperial art policy, never attempted ever so gently to guide the taste of his "well-disposed king"? How much good might he have originated by his authority, how much of the noxious might he have prevented! He loved Klinger, almost in pious awe he hovered around his "Beethoven," for which the Emperor had nought but words of derision: and saw arise in the Tiergarten the stone monstrosities, seemed well-contented with a melodrama Fritz by Magnussen, and did not stir, when our best talent was being reviled, boycotted, relegated into the gutter, when inefficient daubers were favoured; when *the* cathedral, *what* a cathedral was built, when the venerable White Hall in the palace, and the Hofschauspielhaus were being atrociously "modernised," when Schinkel's Palais Redern and Knobelsdorff's Opera House were sacrificed to the lofty spirit of the time. When he was not led away by the strongest impulse of his being, as in the case of his depreciative judgment on the Nazarenes, he was an incorruptible judge, and his piercing eye clearly distinguished between the genuine and the spurious. On one occasion, as he was being shown through an exhibition at Moabit previous to its opening, he stopped in front of a colossal canvas by Becker, President of the Senate and fashion-plate painter, tapped the frame with his index finger, and asked with a look of the gravest doubt: "Has the hanging committee been here already?" He may not have been passionately fond of Liebermann, the

Pretender to the throne, but as an executant and appreciative artist himself, must have esteemed him immeasurably higher than the whole horde of *protégés*. He must have scented the danger that threatened our thin veneer of art culture. His word could have acted as a break, his testimony furthered matters; he remained silent. *Nil nisi bonum?* The knowledge of such sin must not be kept a secret at the grave-side.

There are, of course, extenuating circumstances. The Emperor, after the obsequies, had the last letter printed, that he had received from Menzel. The epistle was instructive. From the depths of gratitude a favoured, personally obliged man sends up his thanks to the giddy heights, where stand the princes. It has no courtly sound, nothing toadyish; but one feels the distance is considered so immeasurable, that unasked advice would appear to be laughable arrogance: that the mouth utters only what was asked of the brain. This painter could not speak to his Emperor as old Schadow did to Frederick William. To expect of him a service that went against his artist's conscience would certainly have led to a flat refusal. But for him to interfere, perhaps even to set himself up as a guide to the monarch? Impossible, even though vital questions of the policy of art were involved: unthinkable. His business was painting and drawing. These he had learnt, on leaving the poverty corner of the small *bourgeoisie*, entirely off his own bat with indomitable energy. He knew how to do it as well as any one anywhere. But to say what ought to happen on high, high up? How are the likes of us to know how the world looks from above, and what thoughts occur

to the spirit on such a summit? No. Everyone must perform what he has learnt to perform, and the cobbler must stick to his last. The letter reads scarcely any different from the one written in September 1523 by Albrecht Dürer, "in most devout subservience," to his most gracious master, the Elector Albrecht von Brandenburg. And the man from Nürnberg had probably a loftier conception of the calling and the inner meaning of art, than the man from Breslau. "The art of painting cannot be well judged except by those, who themselves are good painters. But, in truth, to others it is hidden, like a foreign language to thee. The great art of painting has many hundred years ago been held in great esteem by mighty kings. And they have enriched the excellent painters, and held them in great honour, for they considered that the highly intelligent had a likeness to God, as it is written. For a good painter has a mind full of pictures, and though he lived for ever, he would still have, out of his innermost thoughts, of which Plato writes, always something new to proclaim by his works. It often happens that through coarse art patrons noble genius is extinguished." We never heard Menzel speak so proudly. The son of the Breslau lithographer was also in so far a realist that he accepted things as they had developed. Was he to alter them? That was none of his business; like the singer on Faust's watch-tower, only not quite so devout, nor so rhythmic, he might feel: "Born to see, destined to watch, sworn to the tower, the world pleases me." And might exclaim with Dürer: "Man's noblest sense is sight!" Anyone who merely wants to see and to copy what he has seen, cannot be seriously annoyed by the world's events. One never

heard of Menzel having helped on a youngster. He himself had experienced hard times, had been recognised in France earlier than in Germany, and had become hardened. Pushing is only detrimental. And to patronise "movements" and to dabble in the politics of art? Nonsense, like all talk. He who is capable, will come through to the light; all the sooner, the quieter he is over his performance.

Böcklin has termed the Prussian painter, probably not entirely without malice, a great scholar. Not a foolish judgment. Menzel did work like a scholar; always went right to the sources, ferreted through archives, museums, armouries, worried with the study of old regulations for drill and uniforms, and never drew a soldier's boot or a pier-glass until he knew exactly what the thing had looked like in the days of *Olim*. Industry and thoroughness of the scholar. Or of the artisan of the old school. That description seems even more apt here. The true scholar does not produce in great variety, he sticks to his material, or the remnants of his material, until everything of conceivable use has been extracted. The bright-eyed artisan is glad if he can go in for variety. And Menzel . . . Once more I must quote Fontane:—

> Yes, who is Menzel? Menzel is a lot,
> Not to say: everything; he is at least
> The whole of Noah's Ark, all beasts and men:
> Cocks, hens, geese, parrakeets and ducks,
> Schwerin and Seydlitz, Leopold von Dessau,
> Old Zieten, nursemaids, smiths' apprentices,
> Catholic churches, Italy's piazzas,
> Shoe-buckles, bronzes, steel- and iron-works,
> Town councillors, with or without gold necklets,

> State ministers, distressed in cashmere trews,
> Ostrich feathers, court balls, mayonnaise of lobster,
> The Emperor, Moltke, Countess Hacke, Bismarck . . .
> He studied through
> The great world and the small; what crawls and flies,
> He mirrors it for us in reproduction.

A master-artisan. Like the old artists; but without the demon of Buonarotti. Perchance the last master of the guild of Lucas. No traces of artistic mysticism, of slovenly Bohemia. Everything sound and regulated according to the rules. After a long day's work the nightcap, a copious one, as befits an honest man; but never too late out of bed. The utmost contempt for the velvety ones who wait for inspiration, for a mood, who have good and (mostly) bad hours, and cram their workshop with trinkets, to excite "inspiration." Coxcombs they are, fops and bunglers. Whoever has learnt his craft can always and anywhere produce something proper. Menzel has learnt it; was master of technique, like none in Germany since his demise. That raised him above all. Already at the age of thirteen, and still at eighty-nine, with the pencil in his hand. That imparts masterly assurance. If a painter or sculptor of to-day is called a craftsman, he protests. Is it an abusive word? Michelangelo would remain no longer in his cage; was quite content if the patron called him master craftsman. The same, surely, was Menzel. Very proud, that in his person the craft was being honoured. For this reason he steeped himself in court ceremonial, to discover whether he was wearing the festival robe of Knight of the Eagle correctly. Once he said: "We should have better art, had we better criticism." A dictum of debatable wisdom. But we should certainly have better art, if our artists were better craftsmen, and

not felt almost ashamed, the moment their craft is merely mentioned.

Many, who saw in Menzel naught but the master craftsman, have denied him all imagination. One need but examine his illustrations for Kugler's 'History of Frederick the Great' (or to compare them with Horace Vernet's drawings in the book on Napoleon, a much weaker prototype) to recognise the error. They are drawn not only with wonderful certainty and taste, but often more imagination is revealed in his little vignettes, than in Piloty's monster canvases and Kaulbach's frescoes. A craftsman of the first rank is, of course, quite inconceivable without imaginative creative power. In Menzel it was held in check by a keen, never obfuscated, intellect; by a spirit which, face to face with heroic greatness, remained as calm as that of Meissonier (his dwarf friend), and could be as witty and as graceful as that of a rococo Frenchman. Masterly power, imagination, wit, even humour (the "Broken Pitcher," waggon scenes and all kinds of roguish illustrations show this clearly): what, then, is there still wanting? Enthusiasm perhaps, what Schiller praised as "our principal motive power." I must admit that these masterpieces do not move me; except only two: the quite Impressionist Paris theatre scene and the "Flute Concert," into the audible rhythm of which the lights dance so prettily, laughingly. The drawings, vignettes, addresses, and table-cards are more effective than his oils and washes; there is some slight suggestion; occasionally, too, there are blanks. His pictures show everything so completely, are so anecdotal, of such spirited eloquence, so astonishingly faultless and indisputable, leave nothing to exercise the beholder's imagination. The

creator of these can surely have loved only his handicraft. Nothing else. Procession or ball-supper, Verona or Gastein, Brandenburg grenadier or rabbi, steel foundry or reception at the old Emperor's: only the line (scarcely the colour) interests him. That he sticks to; he holds it fast without ever allowing emotions to shake him out of his devotion for his handicraft. Perhaps it must be so, or else so vast a collection of pictorial documents could not have been produced. Meissonier, who does not come up to him in height, is similar; Courbet, who is said to have influenced him, is different. Character, says the elder Humboldt, becomes a possibility by everyone looking up his peculiarities, cleaning them, and eliminating the accidental. Menzel did this early in his career. He has trained for himself a personality, and for his art an unmistakable character. He never undertook what he could not perform. That he tackled the Prussian Fritz was probably an accident, the result of his first commission that saved the little man from want; it was no accident, however, that he stuck to him so long. A Silesian, hailing from Wratislaw's town, which Frederick had captured a second time after the battle of Leuthen, and where, when Menzel was growing up, the memory of Vandamme, of the volunteer chasseurs, and the King's call to his people of 1813, was still alive. Added to this the "Old Fritz" type, introduced by Chodowiecki; the pleasure of the little one, who would have looked ridiculous in uniform, in everything soldatesque; and the joy of the rationalist to discover in Prussia's greatest king, the only genius among the Hohenzollern, a kinsman. Everything fitted in. Whoever looks at these pictures and

folios is convinced: that's how it was, that's how Fritz, Voltaire, and Macchiavelli looked, and that's exactly how one served at table in those days. The vignettes in Kugler's, and more especially in Friedrich's own writings, must convince even the dubious of the relationship between the two Prussians. Only once did such an adaptation prove a success. Menzel's Wilhelm tells us nothing of his character, of his peculiarities. Bismarck and Moltke are companion pictures, and the illustrations for the 'Comedy of the Village Judge,' unsurpassed for draughtsmanship, are Menzel, not Kleist. The contention, however, that all this could be done by any one devoid of imagination, needs no further contradiction.

We shall never see another who paints a coronation, a market crowd, a Court festival so masterly as did Menzel, who can depict so clearly and surely long stretches of time; none, probably, who observes so keenly and so firmly defies fashion, standing in rigid independence on his own self-conquered ground. But is it necessary to immediately stretch the painter's personality into the infinite, to extend the dwarf roughly into gigantic proportions? A great master craftsman, who loved only his craft; during the course of a patriarch's life, only his craft. Not nature, not mankind. In these skilfully-painted, never overdone, landscapes, the branches do not rustle, there never piped a bird, there speaks not the silence, to which Böcklin's unicorn is listening. These crowds generally give a little more than they should yield; all the groups, fixed by the pencil at different hours, are united in a picture, and the hankering after a peculiar line leads easily to caricature. In the background of this procession there towers no Roman

church, and this steel foundry breathes nothing of the life of the people who are working within. 'Tis not necessary, we are gruffly told to-day; it should not even be: the painter should be able to paint; nothing more; it is unfortunate that you superior people always demand of him "soul," or some similar old-fashioned rubbish. So backward, I fear, we shall remain for a considerable while yet. Honour the craft, show reverence to the technical craftsman, who masters all, gladly and gratefully allow ourselves to be taught by those who will have *l'art pour les artistes;* but still our stupid, longing heart must in future only go out to strong hearts. To those great souls who want to force us to their point of vision. This went beyond Menzel's endurance. Nor did he ever attempt it. He was full of creative power, but without lyric passion. Much more Lessing of Kamenz, than Kleist of Frankfurt. A great teacher, not a pedagogue. His crowds, the outer movement and physiognomies of which are so exquisitely rendered, lack in temperament; the people, who crowd round the carriage of the king off to the war, are inwardly cool. No human features ever tempted this clever painter to psychological depths. To women's charms he was entirely blind; he who has only seen Menzel's pencil sketches of the famous *amoureuses* cannot conceive with what kind of weapons the Pompadour or the Barbarina gained their victories. Has no woman ever lived for this man? Was it with him like with Rostand's poor cynic Cyrano, whom the mother regarded with dislike, who, for fear of appearing ridiculous, kept out of the way of women, and could only say towards the end of his bitter fool's life: *Une robe a passé dans ma vie?* It may have been that. No woman's skirt rustles

through this life. Eros does not beckon nor threaten. Workshop and drinking-shop are the stages. As a youth no sweetheart, as a man no child, and as an old man scarcely a home. A colourless craftsman's existence, that shuts itself off from the world, yet has no secret to hide. Everything clear and cool, in art and in life correct and solid. Perhaps this crowded creation only lacked the over-bubbling humanity of its creator for a finishing effect. Whose shy soul, afraid of bitter disappointment, did not venture out of the dwarf's body into the bustle. Concealed its best behind a thick protective crust. The pain-giving bristles turned outside. And whose work one now admires, while shivering with cold. Who knows? . . . Only an intimate knowledge of the man could solve the problem Menzel.

A good deal, however, I think, even from afar, even by strangers, might have been said of the man, who at length was now at rest. Why should he, just as the forces were mixed within him, have fitted into the Prussian kingdom? He fitted, and yet was not popular, never became the people's confidant as did the other Prussian of the year 1815. Why this man, a stranger to the muses, whose note of character rang sharply, but without heartiness, should have to remain solitary, and saw scarcely anything but Werners grow up from his seed. What different effects he obtained, according to the tool and medium employed: charmingly graceful with the pencil; and yet, with the brush, even in middle age, almost old-mannish. How it happened that he, long even before Manet, recognised the charm of the *plein air*, and yet nothing came of it that was proper, his own, and fruitfully progressive. And whether since his death our German art of

painting has gained much. Forty years ago he painted at Kösen some boys bathing, a subject frequently handled with modest mastery by Liebermann. What is there in the old picture now, if compared with the new? Where are we to-day? Was everything, that had been attempted beyond Menzel, really only, as has often been said, puffed-up poor stuff? Decline, what had been trumpeted as progress? To hundred similar questions the experts were asked to find answers. They dared not. Subtle differentiations are not needed at a burial. The genius on its bier must be infinite. The greatest painter of the century. Children, they say, like to hear tell of giants.

In the realm of the arts this is tolerable. Sooner or later: a truth comes to the light. The serious, whose field of vision knows not only pitch black and snow white, seek refuge from the newspapers in the reviews, and out of the polyphony each ear chooses the voice that pleases it best. Bad about this is really only the education to insincerity, to feigned adoration. Of all that has been printed about Menzel, scarcely anything was produced under pressure of emotion. And no trace imprinted itself on the mind. All the same, the clever heads may have their say. In politics they must be silent, or are only listened to half in pity, half in scorn. Here any shading is taboo, the very attempt at psychological perception is punished as an intolerable nuisance. Public opinion, that complacent old aunt, arranges, as in the Fröbel homes, games to occupy the little folk. In my layman's zeal, I dealt too exhaustively with Menzel, and cannot now probe the playful hankering, the kindergarten craze. That

is no calamity ; even if I did see the great dwarf in a false light, none whatever. Has not this dead much to say to us ? The living was silent, and listened with grim features to praise or blame. "With none of my work have I ever boasted, and what I have painted, I have painted." He possessed that seriousness that is lost in our public life and public opinions. Nothing childlike, and yet nothing childish. What seemed to us so curious in him was perhaps after all merely the way of the ripened man, who in his time had to make shift and help himself. Goethe, whose consolatory dictum strikes the ear, has told the tale of the Ephesian goldsmith, who without break sat in his workshop at delicate work and did not allow himself to be disturbed by the yelling of the mob outside, shouting : Great is the Diana of the Ephesians ! His apprentice he allowed to go to the market-place ; he himself, however, " continues to file away at deer and other animals that decorate his divinity's knees, and he hopes that luck may favour him to fashion worthily her face." A man may do otherwise, says the patient poet ; only he must not disgrace his handicraft. Of the stamp of these old craftsmen, these old artists, was Menzel. He continued, whatever might happen in market-place or street, in his artistic pursuit, and therefore he did not end badly or disgraced. He had lived through so much ; *multa et multum.* Five kings, three emperors. Prussia's misery and Prussia's greatness. The first after-effect of the Kantian doctrine and the howling of unconsecrated disciples of Nietzsche. Cornelius on the throne of the gods, and soon afterwards in exile. He, too, may at one time have been attracted to the market-place, into the wide world. His painting of forty-eight breathes a party spirit ; soft, but per-

ceptible. Freedom and human rights: what thirty-year-old would have not been attracted by such a war-cry? Early, however, he got disgusted with the unreality of it all. The Ephesians might at pleasure invent a new godhead. He never again crept out of his shell. Only observed, and noted what he saw for posterity. Now he has been taken from his shell for the parade; but amid all the festivities of burial one thing only has not been mentioned: that he had avoided his unearnest period, and that he would never have been crowned by that period, more especially never by that, the least earnest period, if it had not found him already in full brilliance.

MITTERWURZER

Friedrich Mitterwurzer (*born* October 16, 1844, in Dresden; *died* February 13, 1897, in Vienna), son of the famous baritone, Anton Mitterwurzer, who from 1839-1870 was attached to the Royal Court Theatre at Dresden. His most successful parts were Wolfram, Telramund, and Hans Sachs. Friedrich Mitterwurzer, who made his *début* in 1864 with a touring company in Silesia, was engaged in Hamburg, Bremen, Berlin, Graz (1866-1869), Leipzig (1869-1871), and at the Hofburgtheater in Vienna (1871-1879). On the retirement of Heinrich Laube, Friedrich Mitterwurzer took over the management of the Carl Theater in Vienna (1884-1885), but rejoined the Hofburgtheater Company in 1894, where he remained until his death three years later. Among his most famous impersonations were Iago, Richard III., Essex, Alba, and Franz Moor in Schiller's "Robbers."

MITTERWURZER

THE dead body of Friederich Mitterwurzer was the cause of another "Kulturkampf." The great comedian, who could not live in the damp or cold, did not wish to lie for his last rest under cold and damp sods: fire, his vital element, was to consume the lifeless body. What prompted him to such paternal care for his earthly remains? Perhaps he grudged the gluttonous worms even the wasted flesh, that in years gone by had so often been caressed by delicate women's hands; perhaps it was only the desire to do the latest and the very latest that promised a last pleasure to the dying man's tired nerves, — a posthumous burning sensation, that might once more attract the public's gaze. But the dear clergy take no heed of the requirements of a pleasure-seeker; they insist, as sworn officials of the world's creator, even to-day still stubbornly, that the man fashioned of dust must return to dust, they will have naught of cremation and such like modish inventions, and grant their blessing only to those who, nicely and respectably, as it was, is, and shall remain the custom, are buried in the ground.

Mitterwurzer's corpse was solemnly blessed and consecrated at Vienna amid magnificent pomp, and must

therefore not, so announced pious priests, be given over to the consuming flames. And because the survivors hesitated in face of the question whether they should refuse to carry out the artist's wish or defy the anger of the Church, the body of the restless man found no rest for days. Nowhere. It was a struggle, as for what was immortal in Faust. The knock-kneed lemurs had this time only half done their midnight's work, and before the distance between the bright theatre palace and the narrow and last dark house had been completed, the hoary strife broke out between the roguish-girlish blunderers, "as sanctimonious taste demands it," and the red, grinning fire sprites, who wanted to save their booty in whirlstorms of fire. If the man, who all his life long, in the misty atmosphere of the stage, had used Faustian endeavour and found Faustian happiness, could have witnessed the spectacle, who knows whether he would not have played some wicked pranks with the angels, to whom he would have shouted, mocking and grinning, with Goethe's devil, whom he always endeavoured to grasp and never quite understood: "They, too, are devils, only disguised!"

Then, perhaps, he might recognise in these winsome wights some near relations, and make the little ones of his kin emerge laughing from behind their handsome masks of hypocrisy. For he himself belonged in some degree to the race of the disguised devils, who can appear so angelically entrancing and drag the duped victim into the jaws of hell by chains of roses. He frequently resembled a fallen angel, Lucifer, become sinful and therefore banished from the community of the pure, whose indelibly aristocratic bearing the rabble, among whom he now feels at home, transfigures with a last ray of heaven's rosy afterglow. A

prematurely faded and wasted face, with wide, empty spaces, slack and fallow cheeks, a sensuous concupiscent mouth, that has tasted all delights, ever restless for new ones,—and above these ruins of a once noble human face a wondrous eye, the eye of an unbending ruler, who enforces obedience, love, unconditionally surrendered devotion, and from the weakest, what borders on adoration. This eye was Mitterwurzer's most glorious possession; it helped him to effects such as no other modern actor, with the exception of Booth, ever obtained. Well do I remember the night I saw Edwin Booth for the first time; he was crouching as Hamlet on the steps to the throne, on which the patched rag King's smiling Majesty was loutishly sprawling, and looked like a hideous old maid, with the effeminate gaunt head and the long neck, the old age furrows of which could not be hidden by grease paint. That was to be an impersonation of Hamlet? . . . Then, at the sound of the King's word, who cozens him with flattery, as cousin and son, the sunken figure raised its head and slowly opened its eyes, as though the dull, hated oily voice had recalled it from a deep dream; it seemed as if one black veil after the other had dropped, until the great quiet eye lay perfectly open to the beholder,—an eye that must often have peered into the most hidden riddles of eternity and held speechless converse with fleshless ghosts. Yes; that was Hamlet, was the strange youth in whom the father, released for a few short hours from sulphurous flames, was permitted to confide. . . . Mitterwurzer's brighter eye was capable of a similar effect. He did not play Wallenstein well, not in the spirit of the period of the poem, and one missed the rough warrior of the camp and the

paternal friend of Max; but when the lonely one, deserted by the very comrade-in-arms, whom the voice of destiny itself had recommended, raised his eyes to heaven in devoutly serene belief, then there shone brilliantly from his eyes the true "stars of Friedland." And this eye obeyed the slightest emotional impulse; it could fulminate furiously and blink with bestial enjoyment, threaten and woo, court lasciviously and stare glassily. But it shone best in the proud head of a wilful conqueror, who subjugates nations and tames women. Then was once again vitalised the conception of the seducer, who otherwise only seems to haunt bad novels and plays, and we beheld a man, who with his glance caresses and wooes, tickles and strokes, and keeps the glittering snake boring so long into the beleaguered female eye, until the most stubbornly reserved mind bursts out crackling into sparks. It was only then that the Lucifer nature of this man became apparent, who resembled a god,—or, as it is called to-day, a superman—yet who was not one, and who like Byron's pale tempter seemed to moan: "And as I failed to be a god, I do not wish to be other than what I am."

Humility he had never acquired, could only linger where he was the first, and would have resigned all the blessings of heaven rather than bow his neck to a stranger's law.

For this reason he fled twice from the peaceful paradise of the Burgtheater. He would have been suffocated in this soft stillness; he was unable to breathe in the land of Phæakia, and thirsted for refreshing April storms. What, moreover, was he to do there? Noisy, boisterous youth was still played by Sonnenthal and Hartmann, the beautifully out-

lined virtuoso, the heavy villains were looked after by Lewinsky, who would have become a tragedian of the first rank, had not nature denied him, her step-child, the gruesome charm of the vicious and the polyphony of the moods. Nero was the prey of the sugary Sonnenthal, Caligula of the giant Gabillon,—Mitterwurzer, who was born for both *rôles*, had to go empty. When Sonnenthal was impersonating merry people, he was obliged to play dull lovers, and while Lewinsky was Richard, he had to strut about dignified as some lord. In all emergencies, however, his help was invoked; for he could play everything, from tragedy to farce, and was, according to demand, Faust or Mephisto, Franz, Karl, or old Moor, Fiesko or Hassan, Beaumarchais or Carlos, Othello or Iago, Macbeth or Doctor Wespe. But this makeshift position did not suit him: Mitterwurzer wanted to shine at all costs, and to win the public over to his side, despite the opposition of the furious proprietor of the 'Neue Freie Presse,'—and thus he acquired the worst crotchets of a morbidly excitable striving after effects, that believes it can be effective only by means of the unusual, the unheard of. Any character, as played by Mitterwurzer, was not allowed to look, walk, or stand like other Christian beings—he must have all kinds of mannerisms and distinguishing marks and a warrant of apprehension, which would quickly rivet the attention of even the superficial observer; his Mephisto, as Speidel wrote quite correctly at the time, a "ghastly pantaloon," his Franz Moor hiccoughed like a drunken sot through the park, and his Macbeth armed himself, bestially intoxicated, for the last battle. Even Laube, the ever-staid, had detected in Mitterwurzer the inclination to say "thirty-one" where he

should only have said "thirty." This inclination became pathologic, when the actor found nothing but derision, or at best indifference, instead of recognition. He needed applause, he longed and panted, sensible of his prolific powers, for first place among the players of the Emperor, and tried to compel applause and recognition by being "different," quite different from his Imperial and Royal colleagues. . . . The Italians had just effected a renaissance of our paralysed histrionic art, Rossi, Salvini, and Adelaide Ristori had approached the (so-called) classic, without being hampered by academic prejudices, they had seen the characters of Shakespeare humanly and unsophisticated, not through tradition's cut glasses, and had refashioned them with a technique that seemed nothing short of marvellous in the land of a Ziegler and a Haase. Mitterwurzer went forward in their footsteps, but he did not reach their goal; their technique he could acquire, could force his supple body and his metallic voice to any use, but he was too sophisticated. To the Italians Shakespeare's dramas were novelties, like other plays too; they had not been sickened at school already with everything classical, no rigid stamp had been imprinted on the Briton's figures by the theatrical impressions of their first youth, which for ever after cripple the imagination,—and so they approached the towering giants, themselves, courageously, with the unused force of their conception: Lear and Macbeth, and the ill-mated Moor of Venice. The German actor had not so easy a task: he had to forget, erase deep impressions from memory and call chilling common-sense to his aid in the hour of creation; he had heard, seen, or read, how Schroeder, Devrient, Seydelmann, Dawison, Dessoir, or

Anschütz had been in the habit of impersonating this or that part, and the attempt, nevertheless, to preserve his independence, was an exertion during which, frequently enough, all originality went by the board. If, as in the case of Mitterwurzer in Vienna, there is added the conscious determination to be "different" at all costs from his closest surroundings, then the danger was naturally particularly great. Sonnenthal had played the *bon-vivants* with a soft and sweet charm, an inheritance from Fichtner: Mitterwurzer endowed them with the untrammelled joy of living of a barbarian, escaped into the civilized world with lustful heat; Lewinsky's Franz Moor was an abstraction, the scarcely individualised impulse to evil: Mitterwurzer's Franz was an effeminate, childish glutton, a malicious rascal, who, probably, in his youth had impaled butterflies and tortured exhausted little birds, and who had gradually ripened thus to great misdeeds. He thundered, where others had played the flute; and lisped, where otherwise loud stage thunder had been customary. They should be forced to see him, to find him striking,—even though the poet's work got out of joint in the process, and the figure crumbled away in a whirlwind of effects. So far was he driven by a clever critic's want of judgment. But as nothing seemed of any avail and he was continually forced to hear how the public preferred the effeminate player Sonnenthal, he ran away, now for the second time. Late in life, only, as an upright man in the fifties, he returned to where his home had always been, and now everything fell to him, what he had formerly desired so longingly: triumphantly, with none who dare compare with him, he stood on the boards, played what he liked, was co-regent of the Burgtheater, was acclaimed

with delight by public and press, and tenderly petted by Speidel, who may have felt pangs of conscience over an old indiscretion. But now it was too late: the unhealthy craving for the striking, the unheard of, could no longer be banished entirely, and the actor, who had achieved such great things, found barred his way to the purest art, at least in everyday acting.

But one must think only of the greatest if one wishes to compare him with other heroes of the stage, of one in particular, whom he resembled as a man and as an impersonator of mankind: of Edmund Kean. Of this Englishman Heine has said: "He was one of those terrible *farceurs*, at whose sight Thalia turns pale with horror and Melpomene smiles with delight. Kean was one of those beings, whose character withstands all polishing of civilisation, who are made, I will not say: of better, but of entirely different material than we others, angular, odd characters with a singular gift, which in its one-sidedness easily eclipses everything extant, replete with that unlimited, unfathomable, unconscious, devilish-godlike power that we term demoniacal. This demoniac something is found more or less in all great men of action or of words. Kean was by no means a many-sided actor; he could indeed play many parts, but in all his characters he always was himself. He was one of those exceptional beings who, by a surprising movement of the body, by some incomprehensible note in the voice, and by a still more incomprehensible look of the eye, can give outward expression to the unusual, the bizarre, the extraordinary, that may be going on within the human breast." This fits Friedrich Mitterwurzer almost word by word. He, too, could, indeed, play many parts,

but in each he really played only himself: invariably, even when he, for his own amusement, was impersonating Striese, the manager of a touring company, there arrived a moment when the character was rent asunder, and Mitterwurzer's domineering eye looked through the mask. He, too, like Kean, was not strong in depicting common, simple emotions,—and this was the limit of his abilities, which, from afar, seemed boundless. He was not in the least unsophisticated, and could not give tongue to simple emotions, nor place simple, sensitive people on their legs. His much-admired Konrad Bolz, whose mischievous quips and tactless impromptus drove Gustav Freytag from the theatre, was a very charming comedian, a seducer and conjurer from the overheated realm of the boards, but not a browned lad, who once had, harmless and merry, capered through the village, and with his banter now befools honest burghers. His Dietrich Quitzow was a robust, a magnificent fellow, but he had certainly never been cradled in the March of Brandenburg, but in the land of the Borgias and the Malatestas; and his coquettish Squire Roecknitz would have been more at home on the Paris boulevards, than in the desert, east of the river Elbe. His very own domain only began with the complicated and diseased natures,—and they never could be complicated or sick enough for him. . . . His mode of life, too, resembled that of Kean. Both loved the joys of noisy orgies, impudently slapped decency in the face, never allowed a lovely flower to wither by the roadside, and amused themselves in affected madness. Theatrical people of to-day are very correct, uphold decency and education, and move among the best families; the pretty girls, it is true,

still continue to take unto themselves a lover, but only because the costumes are so expensive and the salaries generally so small; and if one of them, from passion, throws herself away on some poor boy, she is given the cold shoulder for a stupid thing without practical common-sense. This striving after middle-class respectability is noticeable in the frosty, uniformed play of the theatre bureaucrats, who have waded through bulky tomes on their study tables, and on the stage never allow the bounds of conventional decency to be overstepped. The sentences which Rousseau wrote in his famous letter to D'Alembert no longer hold good to-day: "*L'état de comédien est un état de licence et de mauvaises mœurs; les hommes y sont livrés au désordre; les femmes y mènent une vie scandaleuse; les uns et les autres, avares et prodigues à la fois, toujours accablés de dettes et toujours versant l'argent à pleines mains, sont aussi peu retenus sur leurs dissipations que peu scrupuleux sur les moyens d'y pourvoir.*" This sketch of morals has long since differed from the smooth reality of what goes on at the Court Theatres. Mitterwurzer, however, would have fitted into the picture of the Citoyen de Genève. Had Matkowsky not lived contemporaneously with and after him, he might be called the last great comedian of the old school, the legitimate heir of the wild kings of the boards, of the kings of the art—Kean, Fleck, Ludwig and Karl Devrient.

On every other field of action he would have been an uncommon figure, a hypnotiser of the crowd, a great criminal, or at least a devil-may-care adventurer. For his strongest trait was his determination, a con-

queror's will, before whose powers everything must bend, but which eventually happened to turn out nothing more than a determination to become an actor. He came as from high barbarous mountains into the plains of civilisation, and would never submit to the puny rules of the cultured natives. So surely as he knew how to carry himself, and in every drawing-room his was always the most commanding personality: something savage, untamed and untamable, was always present, and would suddenly break forth like a heavy thunderstorm on a bright summer's noon. That was his charm, but herein, too, lay his danger. As he effected everything by his will-power only, he became powerless whenever his will tired; then came the dead intervals, capricious leaps, the artificial, cold effects. If he saw that a play could not be saved or that he himself did not like it, he gave up the fight, rattled through his part without interest. Those were dreadful evenings, dreadful evenings for the other members of the company and for the public. Behind the scenes the colleagues would then whisper, probably without knowing the truth of their remark: "To-day he is again off colour"; and the critics in front observed: "Those are some more of his whims *à la* Böcklin!" He was not to be recognised on different nights in the same part,—something like our Albert Niemann, whom he resembled in many traits, but who was his superior in the unsophisticated intensity of manly emotion. Incomparably the greatest of our day, Ernesto Rossi was of a different calibre; his rich and ripe art needed no forcible lever, and he gave us, to empty or to crowded houses, always the same

precious treasures. Mitterwurzer was dependent on the strength and the freshness of his will, and had continuously to search for fresh stimulants to incite this will to fresh efforts. He has been reproached, justly, for his predilection for appearing in miserable plays. But he needed the strongest sensations, and was too much an actor to be at all "literary." Show a painter, who is passionately devoted to his art, over some magnificent structure: his first glance will search for the pictures on the walls. Give an actor, who has not yet been spoilt into becoming a faint-hearted hypocrite, a play to read: he will first of all pick out the part that would suit him, that offers him an opportunity for suggestive effects on the audience. Mitterwurzer never pretended; he greedily seized on the parts that suited him, played Narciss, Kean, Zola's delirious drunkard, and, if nothing else came handy, even Cardon, the dissolute convict. The literary value of a play scarcely interested him at all, and it was quite immaterial to him whether the author received his due. He was not made to foster the children of another's brain and to bring them up artificially, and may have held the same opinion as Ibsen's Norseman, that while a man may fall for the life's work of another, he can live only for his own. Men holding such opinions are awkward; they will not stoop, they do not fit into any ensemble, and the democratic spirit, to which also even a German Duke has thrown open the portals of his theatre, regards their autocratic deeds of violence with displeasure. But they afford us also the greatest enjoyment to be had here below, the sight of towering greatness, which widens the boundaries of mankind. They

break the old slates and give cause for some annoyance to the whining puny, but they can also offer to the upturned gaze new rules on new slates. . . . Are they to be forced into the bed of Procrustes and shortened by a head, lest they prove taller than their comrades? I fancy we have a plentiful supply of medium sizes, and may rejoice that somewhere there is a sturdy one still moving. Mitterwurzer was no loyal servant to the poet's word,—he was too strong just to play what was prescribed, too creative to be able to content himself with the modest task of mere interpretation. One often got annoyed with him. But then again, when a drama was produced in which some famous personage had to be impersonated, one was obliged to admit again and again: only Mitterwurzer can play that part. Only he could have portrayed in those days on German stages Solness and John Gabriel Borkman; as he died before he could try his strength at these almost over life-size figures, we shall not see them cross the boards in his proud size.

. . . When the noise of the struggle had died away, there came the news that the great comedian was after all to be interred in the earth. The church had proved victorious, and the red giggling sprites of flame had to let go their precious booty. Even the most modern should not deplore this decision too much. Mitterwurzer had, even in his last years, still plenty of fire, and needed not, like a frosty person, to be bedded in flames. Lust drew the living man to earth; he was not fit for the pure element of the salamander. They did well to bury him in the soil. What was immortal about him was carried up by

sainted boys, and the World's Creator, who is always much more tolerant than his officials, has surely gladly thrown open the narrow gates of grace to the wild, will-o'-the-wisp spirit, who in his way had always striven onward, and led him to the bright clearness of redemption. The great comedian was a pious Christian.

ZOLA

Emile Zola (*born* April 2, 1840, in Paris; *died* there September 28/29, 1902, from asphyxiation by an escape of gas).

ZOLA

Boulevard Montmorency. The dining-room of the artists' house, which the brothers Goncourt had bought in Auteuil, and which became world-famous, since Edmond, after his brother's premature death, had described it in a magnificent volume. Japan and eighteenth century. An evening in March. Daudet, Zola, and the master of the house at table. Daudet, who is ailing, has to be careful of his digestion. Zola eats all the more. "To be able to eat well," he once said to Goncourt, "is my greatest delight; I have only this one vice, and am quite unhappy if nothing tasty is set before me." Now he has had enough, he stretches himself, smiles at the bright pictures on the Watteau wallpaper, and over the coffee he becomes talkative. Daudet spoke of his start in life, of years of hunger, which, however, had seemed glorious to him; his books were not yet being bought, but he was free, no longer the serving-man of a moody master, and could live how he pleased. "Yes," remarks Zola, "we have not had an easy time of it;" and his friends know already what is coming. A miserable hole as lodging, coat and trousers at the pawnbroker, no possibility of going into the street; in

his shirt-sleeves he sat at his writing-table, and the girl with whom he was living called out laughing, "Aha! to-day we are again playing at Arabs." Emile scarcely heeded the mockery. He was planning a monster work, that was to embrace the entire history of our planet. In three parts: Genesis, Human-kind, Future. More modern than Hugo, greater than Balzac. As to its success he had no doubts whatever; he was so young, so strong, so madly happy—the world was his. Later, when on the seventh floor he was squatting in an attic, it was not high enough up for him; he crept through the trap in the roof and clambered up to the top. There he sat, by the side of the chimney, for hours, looked down over Paris, and dreamt of the day when the conquered town would lie at his feet. For conquer it he must; dear Alphonse might, if he liked, be content with freedom from servitude: Zola's ambition looked for a place among the heroes of the human race. And had he not since his attic days drawn already nearer to his goal? People reviled him, but they bought; no living romancer had run through so many editions. And not yet fifty withal, therefore still far off old age. Again he stretches himself, reaches for his glass, and smiles benignly, as though with an enthusiastic people he were drinking his own health, the health of the unconquerable victor, and never notices the ugly little snakes that play about his friends' lips. At that time he still drank with his food. Soon afterwards the adipose tissue of his body became uncomfortable, and, acting on Raffaëlli's advice, he avoided bread and wine and became again as slim as he had been when Manet painted him. He was always frightened and superstitious; when he had a villa built in Médan he

devised a special window-fastener ; three, then seven, was his lucky number ; and he trembled at the danger of an infectious disease. Only not to suffer long, not to feel how one after another the little wheels of the machinery become rusty. Such an ending is not suited to a hero who wishes to survive as a figure of light in the memory of man. *La mort de Flaubert*—frequently he said it,—*le foudroiement, voilà la mort désirable.*

The wish was gratified. In perfect health he went, and was found dead in the morning. Asphyxia by coal-gas, it said in the early obscure accounts ; at any rate, he cannot have suffered long. His other wish, too, was fulfilled. On the wide expanse of the whole world there was no more famous man. Every child knew the name Zola. It had, indeed, happened otherwise than he had dreamt it on the roof and at Goncourt's table—not his fiction had taken the hearts of the people by storm, but a political action, to which he had been urged—he, contemptuous of all political activity. All the same, his ambitions seemed satisfied. A large number of his compatriots had, indeed, turned away from him. But that could not last. He was sure of his cause. A little while longer and even those now blind would learn to admire him. He had stepped into the breach in the cause of humanity, which must ever be France's cause ; and France is never ungrateful. In the meantime he found compensation outside. Hundreds of thousands, millions of voices acclaimed him as a saviour, a liberator from burning human shame. Quite a distance of time since that March evening in Auteuil. But there, on the Boulevard Montmorency, he revealed his intentions. Surrounded by Watteau wallpaper, after a good meal,

a chat is very cosy. And who could surmise that the courteous host would jot down every casual remark and carry it to the book market? . . . We must be grateful to the gossip. Not until Goncourt's Diary was published did we get to know Emile Zola, the man.

We knew the poet. Him, too, one first had to peel out of thick husks. He posed as a man of exact science, who wanted to find, not invent, and faithfully portray only what he had seen. Nature, nothing but nature, he promised, nature mirrored by a temperament that, however, dared not assume to tint the *vérité vraie*. After the romantic spectre we were to see at length the human being as he is, as science has described him. Zola believed in science with the whole fervour of a frightened soul, that has been robbed of its gods, and is now looking about on the earth hastily for support. Listening to him, one felt convinced that all the riddles of the universe had long since been solved. Virtue and vice are produce, like sugar and vitriol. The laws of heredity are as well known as those of gravity. Man does not act as he wishes, but as he must; and the conditions of such coercion are no longer a secret. Whoever has gone through a course of Auguste Comte and Claude Bernard, of the English thinkers, and of Taine, knows everything, is acquainted with everything, is proof for all times against scruples and doubt. And if he possesses, moreover, a creative force, then he is acclaimed the poet, for whom a panting human race, bored by drunken rhetoricians, has been longing. Like a hailstorm, these gritty sentences were showered on our young heads, and laid waste the "kindergärten" around. We rejoiced at this devastation, and could

already hear the new grass growing. It is so grand to witness the rising of the sun, so glorious to be able to say : I was present when Truth was born. Vérité, science, positivism, determinism, naturalism : they followed on each other's heels. What were to us the classics, or even the romancers ? Since the theory of an independent will had crumbled away, and man is known to be the result of descent, environment, and a thousand small and great causes which influence him from cradle to bier, there was no further object in tracing the conflicts which result from the collision of a will with a passion ; now was the time to calculate the sum total of the effects that fashion man's fate. We calculated, and were very proud when we found everything to be correct. People, who had been living longer, who had already survived many a latest fashion, came and spoke : Your wisdom is hallucination ; your science an earthenware idol ; and what your Zola proclaims to be definite results of an exact science, is either still a matter of doubt with those most competent to judge, or else it is already mouldering away together with other absurdities. These dear pedants, we reflected, dare not offer this new rough food to their delicate stomach, and now they whine because they have become nauseated with the cream tart, at which for so long they have undisturbed smacked their lips in the arbour of their garden. But gradually we grew older, ourselves we had seen a slice of life, and could draw comparisons. No ; things as Zola described them were not so in reality ; never had we encountered a Nana, never had we beheld on human bodies such animal grimaces. And that was supposed to be the outcome of observation ? The externals were perhaps observed : the crowd in a village, a gin-

palace, a warehouse, a strike meeting, behind the scenes, on 'Change, and on the battlefield, were accurately reproduced. But the human beings seemed to us too simple, too direct, too animal. They reminded one more of the monsters from the realm of Gogh than of modern Europeans; one recalled Delacroix, who has said that by the elimination of fine lines and by the emphasising of coarse ones, every human face can easily be turned into an animal's. And how many, who the day before yesterday had admired blindly, suddenly became blindly contemptuous. Zola, it was urged, is a thing of the past. His psychology is clumsy, his philosophy paltry, his language coarse. He has neither wit nor taste, and has nothing to offer to pampered nerves. . . . This period, too, is past, and intelligent people no longer argue about Zola as a poet. He was no realist, but a romanticist, was not descended from Flaubert and Stendhal, but from Hugo, and gave us visions, not *vérité vraie*. So long as he tackled the psychologically curious case he remained unnoticed; and rightly so: for many much more slender Gallic talents were better psychologists than this grandson of a Candian woman. His genius only became apparent when he took up big subjects of general interest, and raised crowds to their feet. Then he needed no longer to trouble about small, subtle matters; he could make shift with choruses, "Leitmotivs," and warrants of apprehension. His method has often been described. In the centre of all his novels there always stands some Titanic symbol, some embodiment of a natural force or of a social power, that gulps down with its gigantic jaws some enfeebled humankind, scared by some dull emotions. Victor Hugo had previously done the same

thing; the Cathedral in 'Notre Dame de Paris,' the ship in the 'Travailleurs de la Mer,' were such monsters, which appeared more alive than the human creatures that crawled around them. Zola has torn away the romantic ornaments, has substituted the cult of Cybele for the worship of Mary, and has then asserted with autodidactic effrontery, that his creation resembles the world's image of the most modern sciences. Should this mistake be allowed to minimise our admiration? No; Zola will remain, though much in his works may soon become mouldy, the great epic poet of all the powers of fate, determining human life. The man who created 'L'Assommoir,' 'L'Œuvre,' 'Germinal,' cannot be banished from the kingdom of the world's literature by any Papal ban, any artist's bull, any prude's screeching, nor any pious groans.

He never wrote the epic of the planet of which he had dreamt in his Arab days—at least, not in the way he had planned it. But his youthful mind had scented the right path. In August 1870, after the great victories of the German Army, he rushed up to Goncourt. Quite troubled. Not about the war; what cared he about the war? No. An idea had come to him. Flaubert's 'Analysis of the Emotions,' the superfine, nervous books of the brothers Goncourt, *ces œuvres-bijoux* could not be surpassed. There was no room for understudies. Where these reapers had harvested, a youngster could not pick even the smallest blade. What remained, then, for an ambitious youth, who did not, Epigone-like, wish to wither away. The epopee. His old dream. A monster work, that by sheer massive bulk should coerce the masses. Ten volumes at least. *Ce n'est que par la quantité des volumes, par la puissance de la création, qu'on peut*

parler au public. Such ideas he had gathered from his intercourse with young artists, disciples of Courbet and devotees of Manet, with whom the hot-blooded scion of Italian descent was wont to forgather during the sixties for hours daily at a café in the Rue de Clichy. The cry was ever: The masters, who had the good fortune to come before us, have left nothing for us; we are lost, we shall never be recognised unless we discover something new, something never attempted, something never dreamt of. "Famished ones longing for the unattainable," as Goethe described the presumptuous leaders of the German romantic school; one might have applied the same terms to these youngsters who strove hastily for effects after Ingres, Delacroix, Courbet, after Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, and gazed up with blinking eyes to Hugo's sun of glory. In 'L'Œuvre' we hear them whine and storm, curse and groan; we also see young Zola as he wished to be seen. Sandoz he is called; *romancier naturaliste*, decried as a writer of immoral filth, and yet the only clean, virtuous inhabitant of the cesspool that we smelt in 'Pot-Bouille.' Sandoz tells us what Zola aspires. "The old society is in the throes of death, a new one arises, and on fresh soil we need a new art. Away with metaphysical jumping-jacks! Is it not madness to be eternally investigating nothing but the functions of the brain, because the brain is the noblest organ? The idea! Donnerwetter! the idea is the product of the whole body. Just take notice what becomes of the noble organ when the belly is sick. We are positivists, evolutionists—and should we continue to play with the jointed doll of the classics and go on combing the shock-headed mane of pure Reason? Psychology spells treason to Truth.

We are in need of the physiological human being. Him we will study, in his surroundings that determine his actions, with the free play of all his faculties." That is how Zola wished to appear. He found the skies empty; the old faith used up; nature, like a hostile wild animal mocking its trainer, hated by man's envy and despised by man's supercilious pride. And he had actually become intoxicated on the weak, fashionable potion of Comte's 'Philosophie Positive.' No more metaphysics, neither theology nor teleology; the positivist need only search for the interdependence of phenomena, pin each fact to the condition of its origin, and by observation and experiments advance the science of life. That was the goal. That, approximately, is what he wrote in the prologue to the 'Fortune des Rougon.' These great words, very frequently repeated by the poet, have misled nearly all critics to mistaken verdicts on Zola. He was abused as flat, unprofitable, vulgar, a cool calculator without poetic verve, because he himself posed as a realist, a man of exact science. He was not that. He was, and remained all his life, a romanticist, who, to be distinguished from the crowned ancestors, decorated the old robe of State with the modern braid of positivism. It is foolish to throw up to him that his theories were, first of all, false, and that, secondly, he had not followed them himself. Does Homer appear to us smaller because we no longer believe in Pallas Athene? Do we think less of Wagner since we know that his Brunhild, attuned *à la* Feuerbach, when he had discovered Schopenhauer, was made to sing the world's negation? Theories fade soon. Strong creative force, however, continues productive. When the sectarian dress of the moderns

has long been in tatters, when there will be nothing but a pitying smile for their famishing endeavours to outstrip rich ancestors and to make a virtue of necessity, there will still live of the twenty volumes of the Rougon-Macquart three, possibly six, and this terrestrial epic will be admired as the gigantic production of the last romanticist.

Only as an epic poet is Zola comprehensible. He does not sing the fury of the Pelide, the sorrows of the patient sufferer Ulysses; but fearlessly he follows in Homer's giant footsteps. His stories are simple; their plot, like that of old folk-epics, can be compressed into one sentence. Hot-blooded human beings, in a garden of paradisiacal beauty, pick the fruit that the snake's cunning once recommended in Eden. Proletarians are dehumanised by alcohol; peasants by the desire to stick to their soil and to conquer new ground for their ploughshare; the middle *bourgeoisie* by greed for money and pleasure, and they sink into dull, naked animalism. The voluptuous body of a beautiful harlot tempts men to poverty and shame. A healthy girl, not cursed with sexual tendencies, is rewarded for her strenuous industry with the fairy gift of a rich marriage. An artist, seeking new paths to new aims, hangs himself because, too late, he realises the impotence of his faculties. In a diseased brain the prehistoric lust of murder of the cave-dwellers awakens suddenly and drives the obsessed from the fairy land of the most modern technics through red fog to bestial deeds. A brothel-keeper's daughter, harassed by the pangs of puberty, leads the lily-white life of a legendary saint, because temptation does not come near beckoning, and because in the shadow of a venerable cathedral she is embroidering priests' stoles,

with an unpolluted virgin's fingers. Or we are shown how a strike originates and ends, what happens in the world of political place-hunters, big company promoters, how a town is provided with food, some Provincial townlet undermined by ambition, an Empire thrust to the brink of a precipice, and bleeding from a thousand wounds, is saved by a last effort. Simple stories of simple people whose "special marks" are enumerated in a warrant of apprehension. This warrant accompanies them on their wanderings, and whenever they come into our view their principal characteristics are read out from them; all other traits have been erased. Policeman's psychology. But was not the Homerian creation something like that? Only the Grecians and the Trojans are so far away, that we may imagine them imbued with one single purpose, governed by one enforced illusion. Warriors, who fought shoulder to shoulder and then wrestle with wind and wave for their small home comforts, might be credited with such single purpose of will and imagination; and we are certain, and proud of it, that these primitive people were denied the wealth of the modern Psyche. But a Parisian cocotte, who is nothing but sex; a theatrical manager, who is always shouting that he is the landlord of a brothel; a rebel artist, who hiccoughs around as in a cramp, who loves only his picture, dreams only of his picture, dies only of the incapacity to complete his picture. Such humankind we have never beheld. But we must take it as it is, as the epic poet needed it. To him everything is of equal importance. Trompette, the horse, and Minouche, the cat, no less than the explorer, who sees a new cosmos being born amidst heavy labour, the statesman who alters old boundaries and drags dazed and gagged nations to the slaughter-

house, the organiser of a monster emporium who robs whole hordes of small dressmakers of their narrow means of existence. Everything belongs unto his panorama. He, like Homer, does not shun repetitions, feeds, like Homer, his description with unalterable phrases, spares us not, again like Homer, the inventory of his ark. And everywhere there drones and hums, like in Ilion, in the camp of the King of Kings, around Penelope's widow's seat, in the background some sort of chorus. Peasants, gin-tipplers, servants, merchants, pit-slaves, artists, voluptuaries, speculators, beggars, soldiers. We hear, see, and smell them ; even if they are not visibly engaged in the action, one has the feeling as though behind some crumbling wall a crowd were gathering together, as though the swarm of the infinitesimally insignificant were shaking with impatient fist the tottering, rotting beams. One feels : there, behind the wall, are uncounted numbers of beings, resembling their protagonists in every detail, Coupeau, Nana, Maheu, Hennebeau, Saccard, Claude Lantier, who are in front only as specimen types, and only worth mentioning as types. Whoever has once heard these sounds will never again forget them ; into his listening ear the mysterious choir, of which the old poets whispered, has sent wind-tossed, flickering notes. Stendhal was the master of pathological anatomy of the soul, the leading microscopist of Gallic literature ; Flaubert, Balzac, and Maupassant have placed average beings on capable legs. Through Zola's wordy symphonies there resounds the choir of the unseen powers, that set their seal on a period, of the all-powerful, who on the buzzing loom of time are weaving the godhead's living robe.

The godhead? The third state of Comte's *trois*

états has surely been reached, for the gods are dead, and over men's heads there sits enthroned only the sainted science. But the epic cannot live without gods. Zola fashioned them for himself; and behold, they turned out to be bad, cruel, sinister, threatening rulers of the universe, gods in the image of the *bête humaine*. Zola christened them: *milieux*, and vaunted that all metaphysics were now locked up in the lethal chamber. A name, however, is but sound and smoke. The gin-palace of cousin Colombe, Mouret's Emporium, the market halls, in which the belly of Paris is fattened, Albine's Paradise garden, Hennebeau's mines, the filthy tenement dwelling in the Rue Choiseul, Nana's body, the clod, to which the peasant clings as to a never-ageing sweetheart, the ocean, that lashes the *joie de vivre* into excitement and calms it down again,—they are all gods, are stimulators of mankind, devourers of men, perhaps of a different entity of being, but of no less power than Poseidon and Phœbus. They are alive, you hear them breathe, snort, devour; and their will curbs the human animal kingdom. They are the principal actors of the epopee, and must therefore be described again and again, minutely dissected under varying lights, at all times of the day and the year. Since, however, we were not promised gods, images, symbols, since we were to penetrate to the core of nature, everything, here below at least, must happen pretty naturally. Prettily or ugly, as you like to take it. We are conducted into the confinement ward of two- and four-legged animals, and must not budge until the new-born either kicks or is lying lifeless in blood; every degree of passion, every sexual aberration is revealed and demonstrated

at leisure and in comfort; the dark realm of spermatozoology is thrown open; and he who shuts his eyes and closes his ears, cannot at any rate avoid the stench. Speculation or the impulse to exhibit? The attempt to attract the masses into the booth by means of sexual excitement, or, in Nietzsche's piercing words: "The joy of stinking"? Perhaps neither of the two. The romanticist, playing the positivist, had to show that he was not walking on a mountain-range of clouds; the maker of gods, that he did not slink past the focus of mankind. Christian asceticism has made war on the instinct of pairing, like on the arch-enemy, has driven it into the darkness as a disgrace; the naturalist must bring this instinct to the light, must gather a merry people around the altars of Priapus. "*Le rut en plein air.*" The eternal animalism can only be discarded by a kind of human beings who deny and await the world's end in pious ecstasy. This, of course, does not explain everything; in Zola's works many a page might have been written by a monk, whose unsatisfied longing bursts forth into wild fancies. We are far distant from the merry sensuousness of the world of Rabelais, rather in the temple of a sinister Asiatic god? "And I saw the woman seated on a raisin-coloured animal. . . ." But what effects does the poet derive from his obsession, of his joy in the greatest, simplest symbol of creation! Nana as Venus, Nana on the racecourse, surrounded by a thousand greedy desires, Nana, the workman's daughter, before whom a Count, a Chamberlain of the Emperor, crawl on all fours like a little dog; the bridal night in the flooded mine; Claude, who, in voluptuous fury, plunges the knife into the canvas

breast of his sweetheart's picture, because she will not yield herself to him entirely; Saccard, from whose wicked lewdness, at the bourse and in the bedroom, there spring germs of strength; the furious horde of women, who unsex the extortioner of the maiden tribute: unforgettable pictures. . . . Only one must not look at them too closely. Zola's Apocalypse gains altogether, if seen from a distance. One then no longer asks for "fine features," for likeness to mankind and modernity, is not surprised that this horde of sick and demented could heap up treasures of French culture. Then there stand out, from the writhing and crawling animal mankind, here and there only magnificent types and great symbols of the temper of the period, in gruesome beauty; and memory hears out of the dark the human choir, the echo of majestic symphonies.

That is the poet of the Rougon-Macquart. What he had to impart to our intellect was not over-much. Man is still the upright quadruped, and only a thin veneer covers the old bestiality. Thus he experienced it for years. Only with wealth, with world-wide fame, came the doubts. Are men really so bad, even to-day? They murder and rob, but life goes on; and one must also take into consideration that they act as they are forced to act. Even though the family Rougon-Macquart went under in misery and shame, and with them the fatherland: the child of Doctor Pascal and his Clotilde suckles from the strong mother's breasts new strength for fresh endeavour. The individual sins, stumbles, and sinks; but across his corpse, across putrid dung-heaps of culture, another generation marches towards the victory of the race. Zola has been decried as a pessimist; since

his 'Change novel 'L'Argent' he was that no longer. He was rich, world-famous, could heap up in his house all kinds of costly trinkets he fancied, and at auctions actually outbid Baron Rothschild. For all of which he was indebted to his genius, well served by industry. He had disdained to compromise, and yet had gone forth victorious. So that was possible. Hitherto he had associated principally with artists and literary men; that arouses tendencies to criticise social affairs. Now he sallied forth from his study and found mankind not so bad as they had looked from afar. Nice, honest folk, who admired him; and among them some strong personalities. But there are always those tedious preachers of morality, who continuously babble of the duties of virtue, and now actually demand the dredging of the Panama swamp. Ridiculous; the strong has ever devoured the weak who did not defend his skin. That is a law of nature, and naturalism is an aspect of nature, not an art theory. The Panamists pricked their ears: it might be possible to get on with such views of life. And since their applause spurred the poet, he said to the Republic: Beware of the virtuous and don't allow your dirty linen to be washed in public; too strong a light is bad for the eyes; and so on. Such admonitions from one who is satiated, who found nothing the matter with the laws of property, and was satisfied altogether with the state of social affairs, were much more effective than all his novels. And it was results that the poet had longed for, in the Arab's attic, seated beside the chimney, in Auteuil and in Médan. Perhaps, after all, the politician, whom he had so often mocked, was not so much to be despised. . . . Then came the *Affaire*. Dreyfus's friends stood in need

of a name. Coppée had no intention of going under fire, so he recommended Zola. The latter, it is true, had said formerly, that to occupy himself with the affairs of the State was not good for the poets, who in the realm of politics always appear much smaller to the eye: "*ils veulent l'élargir de toute la largeur de leurs beaux sentiments et n'arrivent qu'à faire sourire.*" That was long ago, however, and was aimed at Hugo's confused plans for making the world happy. The man of exact science might risk what was forbidden to the weak-eyed dreamer. Writing, nothing but writing, day by day; to be ever crouching in the cage, alone, without friction that causes warmth and strengthens the creative force; seated waiting for an echo and listening to hear whether the fashion is not changing, whether youth with streaming banner is marching along, to drive the old master into the ancients' quarter! Long since, Zola's friends had noticed that his longing was searching for fresh outlets. They heard him sigh. Are we not fools, poor monomaniacs, who toil and grind and really get nothing out of life? Should we not enjoy, while we are still capable of enjoyment? "I cannot," he said, as early as 1889, to Goncourt, "see a pretty girl pass by without asking: Is not that worth more than a book?" He finds a girl, finds the paternal happiness that marriage had denied him, and establishes himself comfortably between two wives; for Mme Zola puts up with the affront, nurses the children of his most recent love, and is content if she may look after his quietude, his peace for work, and if he does not, as unfortunately he frequently does, talk to her roughly, and she remains the nearest to him in the eyes of the world. His joy in life increases, he, who used to have nothing

but poison and gall for the politicians, now associates with Constans and Bourgeois, and can only with difficulty hide the tormenting impulse of his political ambition. Still he wavers. A great, decisive, far-reaching success can only be obtained on the stage. Shall he, who never wrote a successful drama, risk the fray once more? "*Des romans, des romans, c'est toujours la même chose!*" Yes, if he could but speak, the power of his word should inflame the multitude. He practises at home; but inspiration will not come and he shuns the commonplace. In July 1892, Goncourt writes in his diary: "Zola is coveting the eloquence of a Lamartine and would, to crown his career, like to achieve the politician's popular success." The longing, "to be doing something else." What has he in life? In the mornings he sits for hours at his writing-table. His only real pleasures are the meals; especially tea in the afternoon, with which he washes down whole mountains of pastry. And the children, a few friends, and the facility to purchase expensive furniture, old church windows, and costly rubbish. It is not much. Constant writing makes one nervous; if a thunderstorm blows up, he conceals himself in the billiard-room and ties a cloth over his eyes: otherwise the nerves would not stand it. Tea and pastry make a man fat. The children grow out of one's ken, the friends die off, and the rarest paraphernalia pall after a while. How much better off are the men of action! Only the pleasure of direct operations is worth striving for. . . . Then came the *Affaire*. There beckoned heroic fame. Up on the spring-board. The poet of the Rougon-Macquart became the advocate of innocence.

Since he wrote his epistle against the General Staff, he lives like a legendary saint. He was rich, it was said, on the highest pinnacle of fame, admired by all, a quiet and happy poet; and he plunged into the hottest fray, risked everything—life, freedom, fortune, fame, to serve justice, to save a man whom his eyes had never beheld. For this heroic deed he had as reward persecution, robust abuse, threats to life and limb; many friends deserted him, the befooled masses reviled him, and filthy hands plucked the leaves, one by one, out of his laurel wreath. In the grey light of day the deed and its consequences appear rather different. Zola was not sitting in his study quiet and happy, but was looking out for a ferry to carry him to another shore. His life was never seriously threatened, not for one single second, and his freedom he carefully guarded. When he was to be placed in prison, he fled to England. He did not stand alone: the world's greatest capitalists cheered him, would have sacrificed millions at a word from him; overnight he became the brightest light in Israel; the *intellectuels*, who had turned up their nose at his work, now scented in him the liberator from traditional illusions, and crowded into his camp; and the man who had grown into the view of life of the *bourgeoisie*, to whom Karl Marx was but a childish dreamer, was protected by a bodyguard of workmen's *bataillons* under Jaurès and Millerand. To risk a combat at the head of such a force does not exactly necessitate the courage of a lion. Zola's congregation has multiplied a hundredfold since he took up arms against militarism and anti-Semitism. Before then he had by no means been generally admired. He had a large public and a small sect, already slightly

diminished, of passionate believers; to many, however, —and especially to the eclectic,—he remained the rhyparograph, who did business in indecent pictures. In his homeland nearly all the critics were against him; the Anglo-Saxon cant would have none of the naturalist; and Fritz Mauthner, one of the ablest of German literary critics, called him a cunning speculator, practically entirely devoid of poetic fancy, who worked on backstairs and wallowed in the mud with positive joy. Where are the friends whom the poet lost when he became the accuser? He made many friends; deadly enemies have become his apostles. Three examples. Bernard Lazare, the first manager of the family Dreyfus, had in 1895 said in his book, 'Figures Contemporaines,' that Zola, whose life's achievement he estimated very low, would ever be ready for every humiliation, every negation of established principles, to increase the glory of his name and to feed his insatiable vanity. Zola wrote the *J'accuse* letter: and Bernard Lazare bent his knee to the genius of the poet, to the saviour-like glory of the son of man. Max Nordau, the Paris correspondent of the 'Vossische Zeitung,' before the *Affaire:* "I believe that Zola is nothing more or less than a conscious, deliberate sharper. Zola is a degenerate, badly afflicted with a coprolitic disorder. It is a necessity with him to make use of filthy expressions, and his consciousness is ever being haunted by conceptions dealing with mud, abdominal functions, and everything connected with them. He suffers, moreover, from a *mania blasphematoria.* That he is a sexual psychopath is shown on every page of his novels. Particular excitement is caused him by the sight of female *lingerie,* which he never can mention

without revealing by the emotional colouring of his descriptions that such conception with him is sensuously accentuated. Such an effect of female underclothing on degenerates is well known to students of diseases of the brain, and has often been described by Krafft-Ebbing, Lombroso, and others. Zola's success is explained by his vulgarity and slipperiness."—('Degeneration.') The same Max Nordau after the *Affaire:* "The pitiable man had thought that the pile of his twenty-two novels, rising high and proud like a column of honour, would make a monument, in the shadow of which he would be permanently able to taste all the joys of fame; . . . he was a noble courageous hero, a character, hard as steel and pure as gold." At Zola's grave-side Anatole France spoke. He had wired to the widow: "The whole world mourns with you. The human race has lost one of its strongest brains, one of its greatest hearts. Zola's mighty work continues to live." In the churchyard: "Zola possessed the purity and simplicity of great souls. He was kind, in his innermost being strictly moral; he was mankind's conscience." The same Anatole France before the *Affaire:* "I do not envy Zola his disgusting fame. His work is bad, and one may say that he belongs to those *misérables* of whom one wishes that they had never seen the light of the world." Is it enough? No; the fame of the Rougon-Macquart has not suffered from the campaign on behalf of Alfred Dreyfus. Even his last, unreadable books, in which he turned Comte's 'Politique Positive' into godless, Popish little tracts, were bought, dished up to unsuspecting newspaper readers as the latest manifestation of the most modern spirit, and admired with ecstatic

mien. The man, however, did suffer from the effects of the campaign. The Celto-Roman, whose father had been an Austrian Government official, never became quite acclimatised to the spiritual climate of France. He spoke and wrote about the country of his children as though he had been a stranger, cast ashore on this coast by a chance. Incessantly for years he pilloried Gambetta as a little, ignorant, public-house gossip, and never did understand what an incalculable service the dictator rendered to France by unloosing after Sedan long-fettered forces, and by making the already almost despairing populace feel, that new precious shoots might yet spring from their wounded lap. Later, when the poet was raving in the market-place, and tore the veil from Gaul's shame, the Frenchmen perceived that an alien had dwelt among them. . . . It was as well for him that he died, and was not obliged to see any more the dull everyday greyness; the best among his compatriots would never have forgiven him. And he had gone forth to conquer Paris.

Had he really wooed only for admiration? So simple, so perfectly attuned to one forceful note, as in his epic world of animalism, men are not in vulgar reality. But he himself has said: Reverence for genius must not impede reverence for truth. And he has cited against Victor Hugo, whom he hated, and from whose brow he would tear the wreath with impatient finger, the hard saying of Sainte-Beuve: "*Son plus grand tort est dans l'orgueil immense et l'égoïsme infini d'une existence qui ne connait qu'elle: tout le mal vient de là.*" The barbed shaft of this dictum, the *J'accuse* letter notwithstanding, will be

frequently yet turned against Zola. His ambition, his craving for applause, were insatiable; and on reviewing the stages of his career, one is forced at the end to ask in what this strong creative mind did actually and honestly believe. As a champion of the *plein air* school of painters he gains his spurs, carts, when money is plentiful, all the oldest rubbish into his house, which resembles the curio museum of a stock-exchange magnate, and bewails the ugliness of modern paintings. In order to outbid the ancestors, he banishes himself into the grey dungeon of ghostly theory, preaches Comte to mankind since 1900, and is always ready to sacrifice truth to effect, and yet he pretends to be the former's champion. To-day Protestantism is to him the greatest obstacle that towers against progressive humanity; to-morrow he is fighting in polished Huguenot armour against the worshippers of Mary. He scoffs at politicians, and then greedily stretches out his hand for their laurels. During decades he depicts uncrowned human beings, scarcely emerged from animalism, paints them pitch black, and bellows later on, as under the weight of some shattering, incredible news, when he sees that side by side with the good there exist also some bad. He had reached the age of sixty without ever stirring a finger against enthroned injustice; then, when his strength is waning, he dons the saviour's robes, writes evangels, but knows how to avoid the cross. Did he never previously see the insolence of officialdom, the oppression by the mighty, the ill-treatment by the proud—in half a century, never until the moment when a rich Jew seemed to him unjustly condemned? Victor Hugo, he exclaims, is a fool who has nothing

better to give us than the advice of a ridiculous dotard, to climb into the sun, and to embrace there in brotherly spirit; and he himself, naturalist, determinist, positivist, to whom virtue and vice are products like sugar and vitriol, he himself concludes his sanctimonious Atheist tract with the admonition to lay aside all hatred and envy, pride and imperiousness, and to graze peacefully side by side, like little brothers and little sisters. How many millions of years shall pass ere the *bête humaine* is ripe for this ideal? On the first page of the Rougon-Macquart there actually occurs the sentence: "*L'hérédité a ses lois comme la pesanteur.*" When Voltaire fought for Calas, for a dead man, removed from earthly judgment, he fought for a political principle, against the horrors of a decaying state of legal procedure, about which he wrote to Damilaville: "*Les formes, chez nous, ont été inventées pour perdre les innocents*"; when Zola fought for Dreyfus, he never uttered a single word against the conditions of life among the *bourgeoisie*, but read out a serial novel about a scoundrelly action, that six or eight officers of high rank were said to have plotted vindictively against a captain, who surely could have been got rid of with less trouble. Loudly he told it in the open market-place, and was uncommonly pleased when all the enemies of France howled applause. Do saviours generally look like that? Did the Galilean thus shout after success? Did Tolstoi even ever speak like this of his Gossudar, of the tyrannical Tshin? But Tolstoi . . . "The good man has obviously a decayed spot in his brain," said Zola. Towards the great he was never lenient. Goethe? "Has nothing more to tell us." Ibsen? "A belated offspring from the exhausted womb of our

good George Sand." And now he, too, has his obituary notice. His *J'accuse* letter, slanderously assert the fanatics, his cry for justice, will live longer than his poetic creations.

In old poems the gods avenge the Hybris's criminal doings. If Zola had to construct Zola's life epic, the judging, avenging deity would be the poet's hallucination, the megalomania of the *homme de lettres*, stupefied by the loud rejoicing of the sects,—possibly a paper monster that lives on printer's ink, inhales iron dust, and vomits books. And he would, with the force of his un-Gallic rough speech, depict the poet's end, after whom the mob of rich and poor is shouting into the decorated vault: What thou hast created in forty hard years shall perish, and there only shall remain what thou didst for the cause of our party. . . .

On a dull, stormy day in February 1881, Dostojewskij was buried. He had never made a noise, had never reached for the scales of the world's judge. No party decorated him for his last journey: a nation crowded into the narrow church, side by side with the Grand Duke, the Nihilist girl student, peasants with angular elbows bored their way through hedges of officials, and for a whole hour there was no distinction of rank in the capital of the Russian Empire. The fatherland mourned for its son, who had been a great poet, who even on the gallows still had loved his homeland, who had suffered, and who had always bowed his head in sympathy with human misery, even of the most revolting kind.

LENBACH

Franz Lenbach, painter (*born* December 13, 1836, at Schrobenhausen in Upper Bavaria; *died* May 6, 1904, in Munich).

LENBACH

HAD Lenbach wished it, he might have been buried like Velasquez. Reigning princes, the whole Court, all the knights of his order would have followed his coffin, and at the grave the high clergy would have shown in pompous symbols that the Roman Church had lost a beloved son. He did not wish it. The bricklayer's son from Schrobenhausen had been ennobled, had been made Professor and even Doctor *honoris causa*, had frequently entertained monarchs at his house, but he was not a rigid courtier, like the starchy old Spanish grandee, who thought more of his family tree and his office of Court Marshal, than of his fame as a painter. Lenbach, on entering a second matrimonial alliance, had seceded from his church. An unnecessary step; for, since his first wife had been a Protestant, the Romish priests would have gladly blessed his second union. But Franz, although he remained an Upper Bavarian all his life, would hear no more of dogmas and Church obligations. He wanted to be of Goethe's race of heathens, and he thought it shame to curb the impulse of a strong heart for the sake of outward show. To the last breath he remained firm. There was no lack of pious

zeal, to make the way to heaven safe for the dying man. The Prince Regent, who dearly loved the greatest painter of his land of Bavaria, more than once sent the priest to knock at the door; very quietly, very gently. Emaciated, with a body shrivelled by long pain, the giant of Schrobenhausen lay on his bed of martyrdom, scarcely recognisable to those nearest him. Yet his will was alive. Return to the bosom of the Church? The hand waived him off, and the messenger of peace did not get near the bed of sickness. When the priest of Saint Sulpice bellowed into the ear of the dying Voltaire the question, whether he believed in the divinity of Christ, he was answered, according to Condorcet's account: "*Au nom de Dieu, Monsieur, ne me parlez plus de cet homme-là et laissez-moi mourir en repos!*" Somewhat similarly, mockingly, and yet with a remnant of piety, Lenbach, too, would have answered, who admired the whole man in the poet of the 'Pucelle,' not merely the witty brain. Unreconciled, unconsecrated, he went into the dark land. No priest, no prince was allowed to follow his body; and yet the princes of the house of Wittelsbach would have walked upright, man for man, in the funeral cortege. The proud man would not, could not, be faithless to himself. On the eighth day of May they carried him out; on the Sunday Rogate. Through the lines of art students, whose torches flickered in the spring winds. When the coffin came within sight, sombre flames shot up from huge tripods. No priest's buzzing chants; a heathen's funeral. The whole town was up and about. Sunshine, flowering laurel, dense lilac bushes, and on the country graveyard a throng of light spring dresses and coloured parasols:

no look of mourning about this ceremony. But just like this it would have pleased Franz; even though the funeral orations sounded thinner than he would have expected. What, after all, are necrologies! Even the best die away; only the work remains. There is in the character of the German something, Goethe says, that he is heavy on everything, and that everything comes heavy on him. Franz Lenbach was not of this type of German. He had lived merrily, drunk deep from overbrimming bumpers, and had hoped to reach the age of his beloved master Titian, who died on the brink of his hundredth year. But to languish away, to become a miserable cripple, no longer to create, to fashion in vigour? No. Rather to his last rest. And to the deuce with all mourning pomp! For Franz was dead, since he could no longer stand before the canvas from morn till night. Into the earth, on to the funeral-pile with his body, the sooner the better! Perhaps he might have preferred a fiery grave, built the funeral-pile on the banks of Lake Starnberg. But this did just as well. Only no throng of black liveries; they were as objectionable to him as to his greatest friend. After Bismarck's death he said to me: "I can breathe again; the man ought not to have been any longer dying." He himself took longer in dying. We may hope that his last breath was one of relief. Lenbach, crippled, in a bath-chair, with heavy tongue and dull eye — those who knew him shuddered at such a possibility. Both he and we were spared it. And on the day of the funeral he would have enjoyed the glories of May, the bright sun, the motley throng; would have placed his arms akimbo, and his head stretched forward, would have blinked roguishly down

upon the motley Sunday crowd, and would have tittered, without a shudder: "That's right!"

In Muther's 'History of Painting in the Nineteenth Century,' it says that Lenbach was "as submissive as he was proud." Really? To whom then was he submissive? Not even to his own Fürst Bismarck. "If for some time I had not been at Friedrichsruh," he used to say, "I felt a dreadful longing; but when I had been there three days, I could stand it no longer. Bismarck was too big; he oppressed me." The true Lenbach. He, submissive? His happiest day was when he could in his own house act the host to Fürst Bismarck. There he had him all to himself, was host and could honour the hero, as befitted the hero. He did not submit to the clergy, who met him half-way, nor the Emperor, to whom he needed but to hold out his hand in conciliation. Nor was he submissive to fashion. He could, without sinning against his convictions, exhibit in the galleries of the Secessionists; as well as Böcklin, with a better right than Thoma. Then he would have been acclaimed king of painters. All camp-followers, all marauders of the "new movement" would have worshipped him. Many an older man has done it, Freytag and Oberländer, Spielhagen and Hildebrand, and rapidly increased his fame. Lenbach did not do it. Eleven years ago he said in the pages of 'Die Zukunft,' "A young generation has grown up, that in unholy conceit will be beholden for nothing to its great ancestors, will turn its back on all tradition, and commence art anew. Any scientist or artisan, who would ignore the experiences and inventions of thousands of years, would not only be laughed at and considered a fool, but would also starve through his fool-

ish self-opinionativeness. But in Art it is now said to be different. What our forbears have produced, they say, was, taking their period into account, quite commendable; we, however, are children of another period, and may not look backwards, must not even adopt the means that helped the ancients to glorious effects. These very modern ones imagine that, guided by the admired masters, they would not find the way to Nature and to Truth, which could not be missed, if with blinkers over the eyes, one just follows one's own esteemed nose. All assert that they are accomplished masters who will not be interfered with, nor hectored by dead Art theories." Among such an undisciplined mob, he was not going to fight. He was far too clever, far too much of an artist, not to realise that young Liebermann stood on an entirely different level from the ripe von Werner, and valued the academic art production very low. His pet aversion, his innermost soul's abomination, was the insolence that refused reverence to the old men, or only tendered it in passing with an impertinent shrug of the shoulder. Like Anzengruber, if anyone dared to slight his hero Schiller, so Lenbach flared up if any Tartaglia had the hardihood to speak with the air of a wise judge of Velasquez and Rubens, Titian and Murillo. These great ones were to him not merely bonzes, but living, eternal gods; face to face with their work he became devout and reviled everyone, who did not bend his knee, for a barbarian. Such divine service was not much in favour in the nineties. What did he care? He read that he was an outstripped man, an arch enemy of modern development, and in reality only a mediocre copyist. Read it, laughed or cursed, and worked on. In Munich; almost always in Munich,

and never in Berlin. This was important. The worst things, our Walhalla paintings, the last efforts of the late Becker, the Alvensleben, painted by Saint Anton Werner for the National Gallery, and stuff of a similar calibre, he scarcely ever set eyes on. Such a spectacle would have sharpened his bitter little tongue. In Munich the holy mountain of the Secessionists was brightly shone on by the sun. Prince Luitpold, whose octogenarian eye certainly took more pleasure in a Piloty than in an Uhde, always remained neutral in the battle of the young against the old; and was therefore told years ago by the Hohenzollern: "I keep my thumb on the eye of that lot." Had Lenbach lived in Berlin, he might have gone with the young; some distance at any rate. But the rebels had conquered Munich; here they reigned, had, even more so than in the home of Rosenberg and Pietsch, the press on their side; and Lenbach became the leader of the opposition. He could not help himself; he was always bound to be in opposition. For his was a critical brain, and he always saw, if not blinded by affection—which happened not nearly so often as was thought,—with a keen eye the weak points of a person or thing. The desire, one might say the passion, to criticise, was uncommonly strongly developed in him. He knew precisely what he would have to do to come into fashion even with the newest—and on the balcony, in front of his house, he once described to me, with his sparkling wit, the necessary strategic means and the resultant success—but he would not do it. "It is too dull for me." These people certainly had talent, but not enough brains for him. What was the good to be continually dressing up some peasant wench from the Oberammergau district as a Madonna, and to

flirt with light effects, which after all cannot be forced into the brushes. Why the porter from the next street corner should have his hair dressed like Death or the Devil; and why the public should be dragged in to gaze on canvases on which, with passable skill, some corner of dull nature had been poorly copied, but not a breath of inspiration was noticeable. Like that he went on, lightning and thundering, invariably winding up: "I am, of course, a disciple of Voltaire." At times it really seemed as though one heard M. Arouet discoursing on tiny Shakespeares. Too little brain, he repeated, too little reverence for their masters. He would not do it. "Art is what the great artists have created." With Liebermann, who repeated this dictum of Saint Augustine, he would have got on all right. But it was then too late; Franz had already drawn a thick boundary line. The impressionists were to him, to his last hour, picture-stormers, enemies of artistic culture, with whom a refined spirit would have nothing to do. And finally, in his heat he had got at such cross purposes with, had so estranged himself from all camps, that he was obliged to fight for his head and his life.

The submissive, it seems to me, are made of other material. They squint at sun and moon, crouch, when it rains, under some protecting shelter, reflect at every step, at every casual remark, whether some day this will suit their biographer, and are daily considering the best *mise-en-scène* for their fame. Lenbach was a *metteur-en-scène* such as Germany has seldom seen; he would have been the man to decorate some millionaire's halls with perambulating and painted beauty. The motley festival of his own life he did not stage-manage according to the rules of

the well-directed theatre; he has always and everywhere made enemies, because he let himself go, and mostly, under pressure of an unbridled temperament, he did what was bound to damage him and dull his nimbus. Even the friend who wished to admire him, frequently did not understand him. The vessel of his being was brimful with contradictions. But it was a joy to see him enjoy life.

I see him in his studio. To the right of the house the beautiful fountain he has somewhere discovered, small pillars, everything as old-fashioned as possible; it was noticeable: nothing is there here to recall everyday life, contemporary art. In the first apartments renaissance of all kinds. Like in Watts' studio. Old pictures (a few masterpieces among them), old furniture, gobelins, brocades, glorious rubbish. Adjoining the workshop. The first thing to strike one is the large quantity of pictures. Six, eight, or even more on easels; and on the floor in the corners whole stacks of them. This alone seems already a lot. While talking he reaches under the leather-covered settee and produces a dozen paintings on sheets of cardboard, and a second and third dozen from a cupboard. And that is not all. Only when I was staying with him for a few days, did I discover how much was piled up in the passages, on the stairs, in the attics. The thieves and forgers, who robbed, had an easy task with such abundance. This parvenu possessed the industry of a genius of the stoutest growth. He worked practically all day; it was working within him. How many of his pictures, how many of his most delicate studies, were done at Friedrichsruh after dinner while scattering his Bavarian epigrams among the guests! Whoever discusses him must not overlook this wealth.

The man had no need to be miserly, anxiously to save up his strength, like nest-egg pence, for a rainy day. He seemed quite happy only when he could be painting. And seldom did he concentrate himself for long on one subject. On one occasion, as I was watching, there came a lady, a princess, not in the least pretty, but dreadfully modern with a touch of *beauté du diable.* He happened to be engaged on a Bismarck, one of his best—the one with Bismarck sitting in the open, with a slouch hat and his hands crossed on the walking-stick; he was painting leisurely, *con amore.* He did not put himself about in any way: everybody knew, of course, that Lenbach paints while talking and talks while painting. So he paints on. After a while he continuously dodges into an adjoining closet for more colour, for he always had very little on his palette. By-and-by the prettily arranged little monkey head that is staring at his work commences to interest him. He has frequently painted her Serene Highness, but now he again searches, as if he wanted to discover something entirely new in her features. Stooping forward, he encircles his prey. The eye—I believe he could see properly with only one, but hid this defect with curious timidity—lights up behind the spectacles, searches, weighs, tastes, bores, his hand strokes his beard, the thick lips part slightly asunder as though there were here something specially tasty for the palate, one almost feels the work going on behind his forehead, how it surges, combines—and now he has it. Away with the brush, his back turned on Bismarck, cardboard and crayons are produced, and in five-and-twenty minutes a little gem is completed. Every trait is there, the extract of her character, the sum total of her mind. Watch in hand, I said to him,

"If all trades fail, a tolerable living might be made out of lightning painting on the music-hall platform." And he had talked almost without a pause. Similar scenes occurred frequently. I have never sat for him; he had some photographs taken of me, and then brought me a charming sketch, most delicate in detail, to Berlin. "Nothing much," he opined; "in Friedrichsruh they did not even recognise it. We must paint a decent picture with proper sittings and real oil; but if you care to keep this . . ." Sometimes he would interrupt his work, when he grew warm and wanted to remove all obstacles to his powers of thinking. Then he would sit down beside his guest on a slightly raised dais in the corner and let off his rockets. This never lasted long. From his raised seat he would soon begin to glance about; stepped down and painted, scraped, wiped out something here and there on this or the other painting. And his talk was almost always just as good as his painting.

In the Allotria, too, I can see him among the artists. While a game of cards is in progress only crumbs fall from his lips, for gambling is a confoundedly sacred matter. Meanwhile the stranger can admire the charm of the decorations, or learn to know the best work of Kaulbach and Stuck from the collection of caricatures, probably the richest ever brought together. But when the cards are once laid aside, he commences. Politics, art, local gossip, and the most personal matters. With a lack of consideration that takes away the breath of any one accustomed to North German manners. Strong "terms of endearment" are simply flying about in the air. All the same who sits alongside—a Bavarian prince or a Prussian lord-lieutenant. It was Lenbach who himself introduced

most of them, and he is here the almighty in his creation. He was to moderate his language? What next? "Why don't you go and denounce me?" Whoever wants to soothe him only arouses the fighting-cock within him. Whole cloudbursts are emptied on the heads of the secession. And they are by no means far distant, but are seated at the same table. They listen, join in the laughter, dispute, defend themselves, gruffly accuse the reviling speaker, are disarmed by faun-like twists, and admire, all of them, despite his spell of fury and under the knout of the most cruel scorn, from the bottom of their artist's heart the blusterer, love the splendid personality of the crowned tyrant, who is frequently an awkward customer, but to whom the dignity of the pictorial arts is of greater importance than a whole swarm of titled official painters.

Did they sigh with relief when the tyrant breathed his last? Surely not. Munich's Art has lost its king. The town, the whole of Bavaria is impoverished. Like Venice after Titian's death. Sooner or later it will be felt by the entire guild of St Lucas. For decades Lenbach lived like a king. Not one by the grace of God; his *ménage*, except on festive occasions, was a simple one, and he was never attracted by the ambition of witless parvenus, whose highest aim it is to overtrump the bank directors in their ostentatious display. Like a king of artists. Like Titian, who, however, in all externals, had the larger style, was a Lateran Count and Knight of the Golden Spur, lived in a palace, could offer royal shelter to kings, and would never have set foot among the crowd in a lager-beer cellar. Sixteenth and nineteenth century; Venice and Munich. The friend of

the Aretine was wooed as a political great power by popes and emperors. A new Vasari might say of Lenbach what the old one said of Titian: "He was visited by all the prominent people who came into the town, princes and scholars, and honoured as the master of Art, who in his bearing was a nobleman." Lenbach, too, associated with crowned heads always as with his equals—unless he saw them far below him, and he would certainly not have moved an eyelid, because an emperor had stooped to pick up the brush he had dropped. Why should he? It is really self-understood, when one is working and the other loafing about; certainly it does not call for long speeches. "Thanks, your Majesty," and forward with the work. When he was acting as Bismarck's host, took him to the Hofbräuhaus, to his beloved Allotria, to the Crystal Palace to see his pictures, he may have thought with still greater devoutness than usual of the painter prince of Venice, whose guest was Henry the Third; he may have felt: Unto me is the greater honour, for I am privileged to entertain the genius; not merely a king, one out of a dozen. With a broker's patent, like the son of the Alps of Friaul, the rebel of Schrobenhausen would never have been bribed. The strong one, who as a bricklayer's apprentice walked barefoot some thirty miles for a little paint, was mightily proud as member of the guild. He naturally thought infinitely more of anyone who could achieve something, than of another born on a purple pillow, or who had craftily obtained some show title. Every humbling of an artist he regarded as a disgrace to the whole craft. He stormed at one of his oldest friends for hours in fury and scorn for having submitted "for correction" his designs to

the Emperor. "Rather than allow any dilettante to teach me my craft I would become an umbrella maker!" Artists should never forget, not for one minute, that they are entitled to the first rank among mankind. To their honour he built the Künstlerhaus, the palace of light, the stones of which proclaim to the wanderer what the painter's and sculptor's art mean to Munich. To convivial society, too, they were to indicate the tune; for this reason he stimulated his fancy, and bade the never tired one devise new festival schemes. There was in him something of the artistic mysticism of the times of Oehlenschläger, of the artists' romanticism of the thirties; he, who was so pleased to consider himself a disciple of Voltaire, because the good God of the Church no longer spoke into his ear. Have I not said that the vessel of his being was brimful with contradictions? *Ni dieu ni maître,* if it suited his mood; and yet not a particle of a rationalist or a democrat. A world without Church, pomp, and princely display would to him especially have been insufferably grey, empty, and dismal; although he painted neither pictures of saints, nor of State functions. And he would have called anyone an idiotic crank, who had made the silly assertion that a Krupp could only be seen by the side of a Piloty.

To his Munich the Artists' Union undoubtedly lent tone and colour. All felt it; and when youth beheld the fierce Zeus from the Luisenstrasse, it sighed: *Nec tecum possum vivere nec sine te.* Not with him: the office of leader he had flatly declined when the secession took place in 1892; not without him: the most glorious body without the head with the shining eye is as naught. No. Youth did cer-

tainly not sigh with relief when the tyrant eventually breathed his last, and the throne became vacant. From Uhde to the youngest, not a single one. All knew—when it is a question of Art, Franz is ever at his post. What he did for the guild even the victims of his mocking spirit will never forget.

The painter's fate was decided forty years ago. The disciple of Piloty, at the age of twenty-one, had been diligently painting during his leisure hours public-house signs, advertisement boards, and even on one occasion Saint Joseph for a Church banner, and so had scraped together in his Upper Bavarian home the little sum that enabled him to accompany the master to Italy. There, in the first place, Nature's hot plenty had its influence on the child of a colder zone. Good Lord: the Heaven! If one could but force it, together with the great glowing light, on to canvas. Franz Lenbach attempts it; relies, like Courbet, of whom he knows nothing, could not have known anything, solely on his sound senses and powers, not on optical illusion or academic patterns; and he succeeds. The "Shepherd's Boy," now hanging in the Schack Gallery, has long since been accounted a masterpiece by young and old. Noontide in the height of summer. One imagines to see trembling under a blaze of sunlight the grass, the blossoms, the dust of the high-road, dragon-flies and butterflies. The young shepherd is lying on his back shading his eyes with his left hand, and lounging in a feeling of satisfied wellbeing. No classic, no romantic shepherd's boy; Preller, Lessing, Schirmer, would not thus have painted him. A lad of flesh and

blood, who could rise in a moment, whistle to his dog, and run away on the dirty hard skin of his soles; for this herding boy of Lenbach has actually a crust of mud under his feet. Disgusting, it was called, and abuse was heaped on the excesses of a realism that did not avoid such rude trivialities. That is long, long ago. But to-day surely everyone must feel, that the youth who could so wield his brushes, who was able thus to catch without experience the strongest light and to model such a body, could also have achieved something considerable as a naturalist, as an impressionist. If he but would. The capacity was in truth not lacking. Gustave Courbet, the robust bucolic Samson of Ornans, when he came to Munich in 1869, might perhaps have discovered a brother in the Bavarian, had it not been for Adolf Friedrich von Schack. On New Year's day 1865 Anselm Feuerbach wrote from Rome to his mother: "Herr von Schack has sent me, *quasi* as a trust, a modest young man named Lenbach, who is an intimate friend of Böcklin, and of whom Schack thinks the world." (The intimacy with Böcklin ended all too soon; and the embittered Anselm soon discovered "too much purpose" in Lenbach's pictures, which reminded him of "faked-up old ones.") But in the same New Year's letter there are the following sentences, which are a hard indictment against the patron: "I spent the holidays alone and without money. To let the artist work much for small prices is no help and leads to drudgery. I beg to be treated as a man and artist. If I am liberally treated in money matters, I can accomplish twice as much. Had I sold my pictures at double the price, as would have been right before God, then you and I could

have been all right, and all this letter-writing and begging unnecessary; it is fate, but for that reason we are not obliged to keep silence." In addition to Feuerbach, also Genelli, Schwind, Böcklin had slaved for the Mecklenburg jurist, poet, diplomat, literary historian and courtier. Now the stingy Mæcenas scented a new possibility; he sent Lenbach, who had not felt at his ease as Professor of Art in Weimar, in 1863 to Italy and in 1867 to Spain, with commissions to copy Giorgione and Titian, Rubens and Velasquez. None ever has copied masters in a more masterly manner. Whoever has seen in the Schack Gallery the Venus, the Philip, must come to the conclusion that here is someone who, before risking the first brush-mark, had crept into the innermost cavern of the ancients' soul, and become at home in their sensorium. It acts like a miracle; the miracle of a resurrection. As though Lenbach had borrowed their optic nerve from Velasquez and Titian, from Rubens and Rembrandt, or from whom he wanted. No remnant of an individual vision. Never did a maid give herself so wholly to any man; such miracles are only conceived by the womb that worships its God in the begetter, and quaking in sensuous and religious frenzy, opens itself up to impregnation. And whoever thus gives himself, through years, retains in his blood, till pulsation ceases, a strange drop. Lenbach experienced it. Since his days as copyist in Florence and Madrid, neither mountain ridge nor wood, neither heaven nor sea, neither landscape nor architecture ever tempted him again. With a wan smile he would talk of the "sunny fanaticism" of his youth. Since then he has only painted human beings; after the style of the old

masters. Portraits for the dwellings of the rich, and for artificially lighted galleries.

A Frenchman has said: "Only he may call himself a master, who resembles none." That would be bad for the ancients. Does not Velasquez, the most solitary, resemble his compatriot Zurbaran? Correggio is descended from Mantegna and Leonardo. Van Dyck started as a copyist of Rubens. Even in Titian's work the eye of the connoisseur detects the impressions that Leonard, Giorgione, possibly Bellini made on the brain of even this mighty artist. Little by little they attained independence, evolved their own particular kind of synthesis; resemblance, however, and family likeness were always visible to the keen eye. Lenbach's evolution seems different. Is there not more personality in the "Shepherd's Boy," in the "Arch of Titus," than in the much-admired portraits of later years? More of the "spirit of the times" perhaps; not more of Lenbach. He was neither inventor, nor naturalist; his fancy never bore any figures, his *nervus opticus* did not react strongly on atmospheric light effects. He came from the Munich of Ludwig the First, from the Munich of Schwanthaler, of the Propyleans, of Antiquity copied in chalk; and from the school of Piloty. He came to Florence, Rome, Madrid, and asked himself, as a modest youth from the country, in amazed devotion, where the great secret of such art lay buried. This question is asked by everyone who does not carry the philosopher's stone or the cap of the fashionable fool in his knapsack. Gallery upon gallery, and nowhere a vacant spot; and all, as a performance, at least worthy of the honour of mastership. Place those long-forgotten ones between modern pictures

and examine honestly the difference! And outside there, they wanted to begin afresh, copy spiritless nature, and regarded it as an achievement, if they succeeded in showing how the atmosphere acts on the subject's own light? Silly conceit. We may rejoice if we ever again get so far as to paint like the ancients. Courbet's influence began to make itself felt. What was achieved by painting stone-breakers correctly, a peasant's funeral, a pond, cattle for the market, ugly women! Paint human beings—Lenbach's conception of the world was always anthropocentric—human beings who are worth while; clever men and beautiful women. The man of thirty, on his return from the Prado, the Uffizi and the Pitti Palace, was no longer pleased with his Germany, with the whole of Europe. Factory chimneys, asphalte, dress clothes, uniform trousers, and trimmed beards. It was not quite so bad in the case of the women; the colourless, shapeless man in a sack-coat was his abomination. He preferred to hang something old-fashioned on him; at the least a fur. One he saw as a Cardinal, the other as a decapitated Jew Saviour on Veronica's shawl. The houses, too, the rooms, the furniture offended his eye. He wanted to live among marble and dull gold, walk on mosaic floors, and hang his coat in a carved, Florentine wardrobe; a frock-coat made in Munich in 1880 or 1890. He saw no discrepancy there. Buildings of the Renaissance! Even though no Renaissance being lives in them. He never seemed to comprehend that the being's contents shape the form, the spirit builds up the body. He would gladly have forced upon Munich building and clothing regulations. That was the most dangerous fruit he had

brought home from the Arno and the Manzanares. He hated the garments of his period, always wanted to disguise them under something strange; and never even attempted to see any beauty in the dress of modern life.

And yet he found it at first sight in the heads of modern people. How silly it is to deride him for a copyist! Technique he has imitated, but never since he gave up copying, since he quitted Schack's service, did he encroach upon the mental property of others. The just should not confuse two such very distinct things. It was a clever idea of Tilgner to paint Hans Makart, the always colour-drunk son of a powdered and braided lackey of the Court, in carnival costume, on the bright Viennese street; a monumental, not altogether loveless, criticism. But who would care to see Lenbach portrayed as a Venetian or a Knight of the Golden Fleece? A little leniency befits even youth; and our secessionists have already bald heads. Lenbach loved the glitter of gold and the shimmer of mother-of-pearl, employed artificial means to give his pictures the semblance of venerable age, decorated the galleries in which he exhibited with coffers and ornamental chests, so that the spectator might imagine himself in a Florentine castle or on the lagoon. Call it a crotchet, and declare that he does not belong to the race of which Manet was the progenitor, that of him who had no disciple, no general axioms can be learnt. Only save us the saying that he was not modern, an epigone, who repeated after his ancestors, had only the ideas of his forebears, and reared only the children of others.

Human portraits, as Lenbach painted them, had

previously never been painted; could probably not be painted. They are not so modest, so strictly matter-of-fact to the personality, as those of the old German masters, Holbein and Dürer; where mind encounters mind, sparks are apt to fly on to the canvas. Not so nobly quiet as the court paintings of the Grandee Velasquez. Not of such careless grace as many Whistlers and Sargents. Not so intimate as Leibl's "Peasants" and Liebermann's "Portrait of his Parents." They almost invariably show only the head. A thousand times it has been thrown up to him. The rest simply did not interest him. He could have painted it right enough. Had he not the right to choose his own subject? To do whatever he was able to do, and not waste time on other matters? Even Rodin, the far stronger creative mind, only gives parts, limbs that grow from the unhewn block. He is attracted by movement; the Bavarian by "genius: I mean the spirit." What does not belong to it, others may do. "The final volumes of my 'Roman History' any high-school master can write," Mommsen used to say. If Lenbach had executed his portraits with pedantic care, not a third would have been completed. That would have been no misfortune? Maybe. Only one must not talk idly about his having been unable to do it. He was insatiable, wanted everyone, in whom he scented anything peculiar, opposite his palette, to squeeze out the little drop of particular essence, and to immortalise the personal charm of beautiful or delicately fading women. That meant haste and no dallying with trivialities. The artist, who is nothing but a painter, who, for instance, like Whistler, seeks in the portrait some particular charm of colour,

would never think like that. For him there are no minutiæ; nor exists for the simple painter the question whether a pious simplicity or a Helmholtz is seated before him. When Böcklin was discussing our Anton von Werner with Flörke, he called him "the most unfeeling sergeant," and added: "A painter of panoramas. The boots, the spurs, the paving-stones are all actually painted,—everything that a commercial traveller sees, but a painter does not see." Methinks that this applies also to a painter, who is nothing but a painter, and yet need not therefore be an Anton by quite a distance. Even Monet has painted paving-stones. "Böcklin was a giant, but not really a painter," Lenbach said to me; and much about the same was said by others about Franz. Not entirely without reason. Who judges him only as a painter does him an injustice. He was *sui generis*. Psychologist, historian, critic. Principally critic. He invented nothing and yet he produced, he needed friction and struck sparks from barren stone. He wrote about human beings, not with the pen, like Lessing about Corneille, Sainte-Beuve about Hugo, Schopenhauer about Hegel, Taine about Napoleon; nevertheless these writers are closer to his sentient being than the horde of Manet's disciples. He wanted to drink up mankind and then report how the potion had tasted. Make some statement about mankind. That his tool was the pencil or the brush seemed after all merely an accident.

Was his evidence objective truth? in the phraseology of the county courts. No truth is true to all. The point of view alters it. And the stronger the beholder's temperament, the more strongly he colours the object. Are Schopenhauer's Hegel, Taine's Bona-

parte thorough likenesses of the prototypes? Surely not. Nevertheless they are alive, and place into the shade, all professorial shouts notwithstanding, all other portraits daubed by sober average skill. In his best hours Lenbach forced the people to see with his eyes. Not very many up to now have been able to do this. Velasquez did his painting, according to Mengs, with his determination. The same may be said of the greatest German disciple of Velasquez. There was no escape from his power of will. Lenbach absorbed the person who sat for him, together with everything he knew about him, read about him, or divined of him, watched him in imagination in his brain and then painted him as he should be, and certainly would have been, had not some immaterial something disturbed the natural development. Thus he dealt with Adam; not so with Eve. It was his fate to continuously have to contradict himself. The tendency to be decorative frequently, when in the presence of beautiful women, dimmed the psychologist's sight. He then got into a state of colour-intoxication *à la* Makart. The senses ran riot, the soul, the intelligence were silent. I must confess that very few of his ladies' portraits appeal to me. A couple of delicate matrons are among the best; in them womanhood had already given place to humanity. Also Duse, whose bundle of nerves never emits a sensuous sound, he has with clever instinct translated most charmingly into a Madonna. Actresses, dancers, all who live and love, he hits off perfectly. Ladies of fashion he is apt to make either too animal or too theatrical. Bright red lips, sunken eyes, and often glances like from a lupanar; in dozens a family trait of tired sensuousness, that would gladly

be tickled into life again. Little individuality, much sex. Almost insulting to the dear ladies. They, however, were delighted, overran the house of Franz and petted him, so that he should only paint them. The female heads, which he merely indicated in chalk or pencil on cardboard, seem to me far more delicate. He was very manly. Perhaps he intended to convey by means of his brush his criticism of the modern female sex, in which case he was more unmerciful towards Eve than towards Adam.

The latter, too, had better look after himself. Lenbach had so much of grace, taste, culture, that his cleverest models frequently did not notice how he had understood them, made them recognisable to others. Heyse's eye of a sea lion seems to be floating in a beautiful gravy. Everything is soft, boneless; noble, yet weak; a mild, soulful dreamer, whose corpulency likes to make itself comfortable in the pose of a poet. Björnson is theatre director and pastor, tribune and zealot; the magnificent head well anointed with "democratic oil." Rudolf Mosse looks like a statesman, cool, and in his deportment he wishes to characterise the royal warrant holder; the legs are a trifle short, and the beholder suspects that the original is not nearly so majestic as he would like to appear. Written in black ink this sounds like satire. Not a trace of that in Lenbach's pictures. He is much more subtle. Heyse and Björnson are, as in reality, important people and true poets. Mosse is a capable, well-groomed man. There is only a very gentle indication of the all-too-human. I know not a single artist to-day, who so grasps the entire personality — who is so inconsiderate and yet so discreet. Nothing is embellished. Liszt is not

spared a single wart, nor the Master of Bayreuth the soulful grin of the maestro; even in the Bismarck portraits the Prussian Squire is not disguised. In Moabit you could see a bit of cardboard with the head of Coquelin. Sketched in perhaps twenty minutes, while talking. But in those few lines there is everything that remains in one's memory of Coquelin,—Figaro and Cyrano, Molière's rogue and Gambetta's friend. An unsurpassed, unsurpassable masterpiece, which repeats in one glance what years have imprinted on the memory. Lessing, I believe it was, who once said that no artist could represent spiritual potentialities that are higher than his own. (Hence the eternal misfortune of genius in dramas without genius.) Lenbach could go beyond Wilhelm Busch and Coquelin—even beyond Björnson and Heyse, Gladstone and Döllinger. As far as Schopenhauer, Wagner, Leo Pecci, and Otto Bismarck. Every spirit he was able to understand. He did not squirm, a twisted worm, like Faust before the dreadful vision his invocation had summoned.

Princes and thinkers, explorers and poets—he has painted them all. Nothing was allowed to escape him. Is it not worth mentioning that this genius gave the picture of the towering men during Germany's heroic period? When Goethe had examined the collection of Gerard's "Portraits Historiques," he wrote: "Recognised in Paris as an artist, he painted the most important people. Gifted with a very faithful memory, he also sketched all the visitors who did not have their portraits painted, and he is thus able to submit to us a truly universal historical gallery of the eighteenth century and part of the nineteenth." And about Talleyrand's portrait: "Here we see the

first diplomat of the century. . . . We could not help thinking of the epicurean godheads, who live 'where it raineth not, nor snows, nor any tempest blows.' So peacefully sits the man here, untroubled by all storms."

The supposition that we have official portraits only by Winterhalter, Werner, Angeli, Koner, and a few Hungarian painters, is erroneous. The historians will learn from Lenbach. His portraits will upset the equanimity of many a legend. William the Great? This kindly, tired, not in the least heroic old man, with a mixture of sadness and bucolic cunning in his glance? Between Bismarck and Moltke he was to have been the great one, and those two but the hodmen of his will. In that case no chancellor would have had the pluck to hang this picture in his room. The historian will, then, probably fetch the portraits of the second and third emperor out of their dark corner; they did not please those who ordered them. Friedrich, a handsome, decaying hero, with wonderfully tended beard and a studied look of sovereignty; the last act of a Grand Opera, not composed by Meyerbeer. Friedrich's son has thrown back his head, as though about to challenge his century, and to harangue æons, but is not quite sure whether the century will answer his call and whether the æons will listen. And how well has he caught the efficient, humourless, clear Roman type in Moltke's narrow, bucolic skull! Lenbach coaxed the field-marshal out of his wig; with others he tore it from their head with a rough grip, and exposed what for so long had been hidden under the *toupet*. Sometimes it turned out to have been only a *toupet de Nîmes*. And Lenbach smiled into his beard.

An iron forehead does not necessarily imply a head of iron.

. . . . . .

No competent critic has spoken here: a layman personally beholden in friendship. But the Art scribe never was Lenbach's competent judge. The expert may proclaim from the platform that Lenbach had brought nothing new—no new method of looking upon earthly things, of diffusing light; they may deride him as a virtuoso, who should be expelled from the heroic ranks of those from Manet to Hofmann; they may point out in every picture indisputable faults, and prove anatomically that many a Bismarck head is merely a leather rag with two Titanic eyes—they may. And if every picture, every one without exception, had a hundred faults: behind all these defective pictures there still would stand a great man; and more weighty in the balance than everything else that a man can do, is what his personality has to offer. I believe that Lenbach did not consider himself a great painter in the highest meaning of the word; to me, at least, he has said, in front of his Titian, with almost pious devotion, that he was "but a bit of a student of the history of the human animal," and for the ancients just good enough to wipe their boots on. In the presence of small conceit he certainly felt big; and, it seems to me, with perfect justification. Not probably one of the greatest painters, but certainly one of the cleverest; a keen critic's optical nerve, seemed in him to be embedded in the brain of a visionary. When he felt so inclined he could fascinate everyone. With his sparkling wit, his grumpy grace, his humour, with a thousand

human touches. He was a stranger to none of them, not even to those, who do not like to walk about uncovered. He combined manly dignity, womanly moods and child-like joy at glittering nonsense in the spectrum of his enigmatic personality. Gave like a prince of fairyland, and dined off tripe in a smoky cellar. Threw massive hailstones at some high dignitary's hard head, and then chirruped, like a heavenly consoler, around some *gamine*, who had slipped and hurt herself. He would work for days, for weeks, to ensure success for a *bal masqué* of three hours' duration. Incalculable: said the distant ones; inexhaustible, irreplaceable: joyfully exclaimed the friends. A thorough man, hale, and never tainted by the varnish of the *bourgeoisie*. And an artist, who with the creative power of genius imparted long life to a gifted human race.

Fame and Love have crowned him. I have placed laurel and red roses on his springtide grave.

MATKOWSKY

Adalbert Matkowsky, actor (*born* December 6, 1858, in Königsberg; *died* on March 16, 1909, at Charlottenburg, near Berlin).

MATKOWSKY

AMID the howling of a March storm Adalbert Matkowsky passed away. Royal Prussian Court Actor; and yet Germany's greatest tragedian: the only one in the realms of the German language, since Albert Niemann no longer trod the boards. And, like Niemann, a fellow big in every way. Like him, with wine and women, at the inn and in the bedroom. In a constant delirium from desire to enjoyment; and during enjoyment yearning for desire. On the stage not so clean, not of such Teuton chastity, not so knightly as the singer. Adalbert would not have been able to weave Mehul's gentle Joseph of such delicate soulful fibre as Albert; could not have pressed the virgin body of the maiden of Brabant to his pious breast with such fervent gentle strength; could not have purified of vapour and smoke Hunding's blazing hearth, by the side of which the sister, lest the race should be without a bud in spring, mates with the brother. For the gambler's instinct of the Norman duke, for the pangs of conscience of Johann von Leyden, for Masaniello's fury and Tannhäuser's boastful lechery, Adalbert would have found shriller, more fiercely bleeding notes; and the Moor of Venice, the Squire of Corioli; Nebuchadnezzar's field

captain; the boy Golo, possessed by the evil spirit; the dreamer from Lydia, devoid of morals: Albert would not so have grasped by the roots of their being. Blonde and black heroism; German and Slavonic. To impersonate Verdi's Oriental general, and even more so, in the case of Rubinstein's Nero, Niemann had to cover up his soul; and Matkowsky, half a Pole, never came so near to the Teutonic knightly smugness as the master builder of the Burgtheater, grown up from a hoiden and nurtured in the kitchen of Weissenthurn, Kotzebue and Benedix. Yet another difference. Niemann has ennobled for us Spontini, Meyerbeer, Auber; raised them into the clear light of art's glittering mountain summits; and Matkowsky was, when playing Wildenbruch or even lesser playwrights, never more than a brilliantly resplendent stage prince. Niemann's Raoul and Robert, his prophet and brigand, his Cortez and Rienzi will never be forgotten. Incomparable in the nobility of his strong heart and the noble restraint of his manhood were his Lohengrin, Siegmund, Tristan (his finest impersonation), which he had no need to Germanise first. Matkowsky in the wordy mantle of pomp of the Epigones: to look back upon it makes one shiver; scarcely tolerable was the performance, except when under the impetuous grip of the fist, the clumsy, weakly constructed form was shattered. Diversity of form of art, of racial genius, of personal stature? Raoul and Fra Diavolo, at any rate, are made of stouter material than King Henry of the primer and the flunky giants of the explosive poet Lauff. The Teuton serves more willingly than the Slav, and with more modest pride, the cause to which he has once (even though in a weak moment) sworn allegiance. And Niemann was,

his lowly descent notwithstanding, cavalier, hunter, horseman, nobleman, man of the world, and is still to be seen, a white-haired misanthrope, seated in a noisy café before a chessboard, or poring over the journals and magazines of all sorts; he is also to be seen when the diva Lilli Lehmann or Caruso, the darling of the gods, sings, or something uncommon tempts one into the theatre. That would not have suited Matkowsky. He never entered a theatre unless active duty called him (he never saw one of the Berlin stage stars shine; to look on inactive he could not have tolerated for an hour); never went to dinners, balls, suppers, and felt so uncomfortable in a café, that only cognac could console him in his state of orphanage. He lived in Berlin for decades, and yet entirely without any intercourse, and almost a stranger to those who long to obtain their table decorations from Thalia's realm. Of fashionable life, though he lived amid the luxuries of a curio collector, he knew scarcely more than a barefooted village urchin. He would wear a black frock-coat and an evening dress waistcoat, the opening of which was barely covered by a big tie, with a spotty soft slouch hat, and when he wished to appear elegant he would wear pearl-grey trousers in broad daylight and patent-leather boots with elastic sides. He never copied the swells from the wings, would not appear dainty, nor boastfully wave to the multitude: Behold the greatest hero of the boards in your good town! Inwardly he lived entirely for his art; scarcely ever spoke of anything else but old and new *rôles* (which he had generally committed to memory word for word before the first rehearsal), and yet was a little ashamed of his passionately beloved calling. It embittered him that he was only allowed to depict what others had

done; to repeat, to copy, but never to act on an arbitrary decision. It drove him, if not engaged as "guest," on some small provincial stage, from the midst of sociable *bourgeoisie* into some quiet old-fashioned inn; to Lutter and Wegner or to Steinert and Hansen. There he felt at home. Here he could drown his craving for creative action. His few friends, who knew his haunts, he would gather around him over claret or champagne, and would talk in whispers with an ecstatic look of the characters he would shortly impersonate. He would dream of them in his increasing intoxication when left alone behind a phalanx of bottles. Thus, he opined, all the most gifted actors had carried on, from wild Wilhelm Kunst and the cleverly mad Ludwig Devrient to Frédéric Lemaitre, Baison and Mitterwurzer. The histrionic profession as a martyrdom: that was his greatest consolation. His favourite dictum: the actor must not aspire to the *bourgeoisie*, but must remain a pariah, homeless, owning no property, must wander restless through changing dreamlands, and die, not too late, on the high-road. He was not quite so bitterly in earnest as that sounded. Matkowsky was glad to be Court Actor (for this reason golden bribes could not tempt him to Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater), loved to accumulate rare curios, gave to shamefaced poverty with an open hand, and always kept his affairs in order. But he was disgusted with the very correct stage officialdom that now spreads itself on the boards, the horde of over-dressed youths and of girls feigning virtue, who sneak through the gate of grace like through an office door, have read an astonishing amount and who have not a drop of the daringly sensuous comedian's blood in their veins. From these he fled in inns and on the boards; from their office

atmosphere he sought refuge in mountain huts and ocean-going sailing-ships. The priestly consciousness with which Frau Lilli Lehmann converts her Traviata into a devotional service, was unattainable to the unholy Adalbert's mind, in the fangs of the arch-enemy Al Kohol. He did not pose as a priest of the arts, he wanted to appear a gipsy without caste (and yet he had himself photographed with a copious decoration of orders). Quite intimate, into the heart of hearts, nobody probably ever became with him; certainly no man. In this trait, too, he resembles Niemann. Solitary visionaries. Kings of the desert, who, while petting their cub and its pregnant mother with tender paw, weigh and consider their most important affairs alone to the end. Like an old lion, hampered and impotent, Niemann growls in an ant-heap. Like a sick lion Matkowsky gazed upon the crowd when his memory, the joy of living and the suppleness of his limbs had vanished. But he would never, as did the singer, from his own free will, while alive, have turned his back on the boards. Among the creations of his dreams many a human creature pressed forward into the stage's domain of light. Lear and Timon he wanted to impersonate, the old Faust and the judge in Zalamea, Cleopatra's tired friend and King Philip, Brand and Julian, Marbod and Guiscard, Stockmann and Solness. And many another part. His kingly rights in the realms of the world's poesy knew no boundaries. He possessed humour (not only for Philip Faulconbridge and Richard Gloster, whose souls, like a dark grey snake's skin, crackle and scatter sparks); he was the merriest Heinz, the hottest-headed, stuttering Percy, the most manly impertinent Petruchio, as leader of the Cheruscans the most cunning, most amorous fox

in the skin of the most portly bear. He would have been the freshest, merriest Bolz, countrified and robust, despite paper masks, and the most cunning elector of Kleist, the sliest, the most impudent, and at the same time the most knightly Falstaff. And he could easily have mastered (those in the know need not be told) everything "modern" without difficulty: the Viennese Œdipus, the Margrave of Saluzzo, and even Wedekind's hetman. Mitterwurzer was wittier, richer in quick ideas and protean tricks, and possibly in subtle imagination. Yet never quite a tragedian. Always analytical, whose somersaults seemed to scoff at the strict dignity of classical poesy, whose romancer's irony ate into the noblest organism, and who among the glaciers of his creations afforded but momentary pleasures, suddenly glistening. His Richard we see in memory tugging at Anne's widow's veil and whining Reynard-like among the bishops; we do not see him in armour, not as the wild boar sharpening his tusks for sanguinary fray. His Macbeth, his Franz Moor reel like drunkards through memory; a Malatesta strayed into the Northland and an effeminate, childishly mischievous scoundrel. His Shylock is a *baroque* of the Ghetto, and was never Jessica's father. Never had his Wallenstein loved Octavio's son, nor commanded in camp; it was only in the glad glance of the bright enthusiast's eye that there shone the "star of Friedland." In the realm of diseased and complicated humanity none of his contemporaries could compare with him. Plain force and the simple emotions of simple souls: his Lucifer genius was unable to rise to such pure heights; and when he raised himself on his toes and nearly wrested his arms out of their sockets, the difference became only more noticeable. A king of the

boards for hospital and low dens, not the progenitor, proud in the strength of his loins, of a race of heroes. He possessed the great synthesis, the powerful unity of will and thought, the child's faith in every poetic sky, the architect's masterly skill of designing the ground-plan. No isolated episodes, no instantaneous photographs were imprinted on the memory: the figures are part and parcel of himself (unless, like Wallenstein, they came to light as cripples); as though a young god had fashioned them in his image.

"He has become a man overnight, and has yet remained a child. How that appeals to me! For that I esteem him like none other." Thus Hebbel's Count Palatinate speaks of Golo. One had to say the same of Matkowsky's Ephebe. He was of medium height only and early developed in breadth. But behind the footlights he seemed taller and of slimmer build; the sky-ascending summit caused the illusion; on the athlete's neck the powerful head. A Titan's head? Antinous would by its side appear too effeminate, that of the skating young Goethe too earthly. He resembles both; and places both in the dark with the beam of his smile, with the flash of his angry look. A dark-brown head of hair, untamable by any comb. A high-domed forehead over broad expanses of cheek, an almost too delicate nose with Slave nostrils, a remarkably small mouth (the mouth of a boy in a heated sleep, who, like a young tree in spring, feels the sap rising, and dreams of kisses), the chin of a stubborn autocrat. Beneath the light-brown skin, that, delicate and firm, like that of a ripe peach, envelopes the beautiful creation, there beats the Polish blood; German lips do not twitch so expressively, and the nostrils of a

Teutonic nose do not move so restlessly, do not extend so taut with every emotion of the senses. The face is still wanting in light. Then the lid is raised from a blue eye, the power of which immediately grips the onlooker and renders him subservient to his Majesty. An eye that can rejoice and rave, pet and scratch, riot and ponder, seduce with a greenish wink and destroy behind the black veil of Iris. It seems as though the mist were rising from the landscape; as though only now all shapes stood out clearly. He has obstinately preserved from his childhood a pious faith in fairy tales, and demands, as once he asked his mother for fruit or cake, from the Almighty the happiness of the gods. He is strong and yet effeminate. Sensual like an insatiable glutton and the most voluptuous bayadere, and ascetic like a monk true to his vow, even under martyrdom. He has tasted all dishes, and still can deny himself the most tempting delights. Boy and man. Lover and warrior. Dreamer and tyrant. Thus proclaims the eye; thus announce the sounds of his voice. A voice that thunders and sobs, calls to merciless war and to fervent mating, that with alluring twitter charms a maiden's virgin senses, mocks at the multitude's illusions, scoffs, Prometheus-like, at the most ancient forces, and summons with bell-like tones protection for the sanctuary of a tribe, or for a congregation of the faithful; a voice defying fate in the glories of May and the stress of winter, pregnant with blood and tears. The voice of a boy in love and of a commander-in-chief . . . "And has yet remained a child. How that appeals to me! For that I esteem him like none other."

Hot-headed youth is marshalled in by two wild boys: Squire Bugslaf ("Hans Lange") and Prince

Sigismund ("Das Leben ein Traum") ("Life is a Dream"), an insolent, mannish lout, and one obsessed by the mania of ruling, who pants along the path from semi-animalism to demigod. Calderon's Prince was probably Matkowsky's most flawless impersonation; for in this drama he did not need to hold himself in check, and was allowed to throw up from the crater of his soul glowing lava and blackish slack. The magnificently raging youth, whose lip is quivering and in whose eyes red fire is burning, who with pale cheek threatens heaven with his outstretched fist, and from his cramped breast, like from steel armour, brings forth the trumpet note of an angry archangel: that will not be seen nor heard again. (It was wise of Joseph Kainz that he never played the star parts of Wagner, of Hendrich, Robert. With his voluble spirit, his nimbly skipping rhetoric and glittering theatrical dialectics he would not have been able to do it; not even with his manners of a hereditary Prince and the wild grace, which were the best part of his youth. It cannot be done without elementary aboriginal force. Herr Kainz was never more than a stepson of Melpomene. Nimble page's legs carried him across chasms; into abysses he never ventured, and avalanches he always dodged. In spite of the dazzling delusion of his gifts his was by no means a tragically attuned nature. In charm of disposition and whimsical pomp, the most alluring boy Karl; as a spoilt gourmet, despising maiden's charms, a King Alfonso, as portrayed by Grillparzer, without manhood. But a Romeo, who remains alive and learns to laugh again with any other Rosalind; a Homburg, who forgets his heroic mannerisms long before coming face to face with death; a Cain from the cottage quarter, miles removed

from Goethe's bounteous plenty with his clean art of sketching, witty even when in earnest. Not a tragedian, and certainly no Titan; never a man. And of an effeminate *haute bourgeoisie* who believe in giants only in so far as the realms of bulls and bears are concerned, and only wished to see one of their own kidney in cuirass and gorget, and therefore preferred the swashbuckler Matkowsky, who would have bowled over the graceful rhetorician at the first impact, had his wish to enter the lists with him been gratified.) The Polish Prince promised us the robber Moor, of whom the disciple of Karl had dreamed; the childish greatness of the student fed up with Roman virtue and Swabian wine, who longs for the office of the world's judge. "Hear me, moon and stars!" One held one's breath in the stormy roar of this avenger's voice. And Ferdinand, the dare-devil soldier, who is suffocated by Court intrigues. The rough, chastely longing templar, with the strength of the lungs of a bear. Lavagna's sultry malice and the crafty passion of Beaumarchais the pamphleteer (whose heat melted Sonnenthal's elegiacal coquette little wax doll), Bolingbroke's son, who was thought lost. The Richard of the most human and most modern King drama. The page of Weislingen poisoned with aphrodisia. The mad Atride on Tauris. Golo and Raskolnikow: the psychology of the murderer unveiled, skinned to its finest texture of cells.

Such was young Matkowsky, who came from Dresden *viâ* Hamburg to Berlin. Rather down at heels, which was not surprising. The youthful charm of the twenty-year-old had all but supplanted from Saxon favour Dettmer, the knightly actor with the trumpet voice, the dressy seigneur, with the bright temperament of

one who has never been tainted by a dark fate. Venal and modest femininity flew at him, and the stoutest heart of the North German stage fetched him from the dress rehearsal *recta* between the blankets. Thus he lived every day; from the stage to the pothouse, from the pothouse to the girl for night quarters. Wicked doings became known, and only increased his fame. There was no stage-manager who could master this exemplary specimen. And excursions into all kinds of Saxon villages. Pollini captures him for his Hamburg warehouse of dramatic art. Every night between the Dammthor and the Schwiegerstrasse, or in Altona, and again a tired old stager in the manager's seat. With an already somewhat swollen body and objectionable operatic star manner, Adalbert came to the Schillerplatz. He perspires, exaggerates, displays his peacock's tail, adds operatic effects, rolls his R's, and gurgles as though he had never been at Oberländer's Academy, gesticulates and groans too much, and waxes, when serving Schiller (or Turgenjew), too slavishly effeminate. The women he holds; the men still turn up their nose at the overheated mannerisms. Fontane condemns quite foolishly, and Frenzel half-praises with pity; both consider their Ludwig much nobler and fuller of ideal dignity. Only the grey-headed Karl Werder, the theatrical professor who has still the note of Devrient, Dawison, and Dessoir ringing in his ear, perceives immediately that here at length some one has come from the land of genius into the house of Hülsen. With him the novice works; with him only, for on the Court stage Herr Grube, the spoil-sport, is soon in command, whose nimbus the inspector from Meiningen still protects for a while. And Matkowsky would so much like to be

working ; in the depth of his heart his only joy, and for want of it he sought other distractions. Those who occupy the boards here, are possessed of less rhythm, than in Dresden the clever, refined Pauline Ulrich, Franziska Ellmenreich, with the virgin's tears, the lady's nerves, the widow's titter ; than Dettmer, Swoboda, and Porth. But the town, this soberly productive Prussian metropolis piling up in a grey smock of sorrow, values upon values, gradually makes him more serious. And he is also growing older. No longer does he waste so much time with women. Holds himself in check. And the juvenile lover develops into the hero.

Not the hero whom Emil Devrient once paraded through Pan-Germany's non-united counties : the nobleman of courtly demeanour, whom nobody must touch, who never forgot his cavalier's dignity, not even in a whirlwind, who under the mailed glove had painted fingers with rouged and polished nails, who smelt of violet soap and eau-de-Cologne, and who wished at all costs, even in storm and stress, to appear handsome and well groomed.

Nor the rougher Teuton hero of Dettmer and Krastel, who as Dunois and Wetter vom Strahl, as Egmont, knight templar, Ingomar, Parzival, gained for themselves wreaths of Saxon, Palatinate, and Kahlenberg laurel. He looked on life comfortably with a bright eye, emptied and filled his bumper no oftener than is customary with good fathers of families, did not prudishly avoid a maidenly blossom, but did not allow a woman's skirt to obstruct the outlook into the distance. Matkowsky's hero had a different appearance. When his Egmont was speaking of the somnambulist, whom the sage must not warn nor

waken, it seemed as though he himself with slumbering eyes were walking along the narrow gutter on the roof; it was the thunderstorm vision of one who dreams his dark fate, would gladly escape, and yet could not rest in dear Clara's warm bed, far from the Spanish terror. When his Dunois called to battle the people of France, his note had not the warrior's clearness, not the brave confidence, which enabled Dettmer's voice to resound joyously in a high chest register; it seemed rather as though the bastard looked for the orphan, the offspring of sin sought the girl cursed by her father, and as though for the outlawed the dark fate could only be accomplished in dreadful communion. Adalbert's heroes never were harmless; even in his Petruchio there was something of the lion and a sparklet of princely hell-fire. Thus it came about that he was best in characters possessed by the demon: Golo and Holofernes, Othello and Macbeth, Coriolanus and Ottokar, Orestes and Faust, better than as the faithful knights, with a blonde shock of hair and blue eyes (for whose impersonation he utilised a synthesis of Berndal and Dettmer). Not only the Bethulian, glimmering in the focus of womanhood, believed his statement that he had been suckled by a lioness. Desdemona, too, was in the house of this Moor but a poor lion's bride, caressed to destruction. Why did she escape from the seignorial peace of her paternal palace, why did she slip into the gondola and offer her white neck naked to the paw that had learnt all too late how to caress. This Coriolanus would have throttled the soul of Valeria, and this Faust, who by the side of Gretchen's bed of shame gazes through the flames of purgatory into a new, creative springtime, was worth it that the most beauteous Grecian

arose for him from the grave, and that the Almighty and Satan with all their mobilised hosts should fight for what was immortal in him.

A great soul, in the deepest cavern of which there lurked a watching demon, by day and by night. Without warning he would break out, and then it seemed as though volcanic fire were about to devastate the earth around. Then this soul was heavenly and hellishly great; it widened to our eyes the limitations of humanity. Holofernes, who, grimly smiling, causes sacrificial flames to blaze up for his vain master. King Macbeth in face of the moving wood, the branches of which conceal the sword of the avenger chosen by fate. Coriolanus in a crowd of hoarse, perspiring Quirites. The Polish Prince who scatters the brain of a traitor on the pavement. The teacher and doctor, who curses faith and love, and the consolation of grapes and patience. Then there was lightning and thunder in the demons' region. Such an one returns not again; never so forceful a being.

Only such (don't you see it at last?) are also as artists truly great; even if they do not always possess the pluck for personal endeavour (Lenbach), meander for long bungling through all times and zones (Marées), and never quite learn to master their handicraft (Matkowsky). The great tragedian's tongue never acquired the glibness of Kainz; up to the last night of his stage career he was in a constant state of steaming perspiration and "put it on too thick," according to the philistines in the cold frogs' pond. And yet to every one, capable of being sentient to Art, he was worth a hundred times as much as an entire dozen of even the best Basser-

mann type. For in him human nature was more majestic than in these performers and constructors of creditable mediocrity. "Natural" in their sense, the New-Berlin acceptation, Matkowsky was not (still he could be it at any moment, when playing needy manikins of to-day); he was no "realist" of the diminutive calibre of the petted dilettante Rittner, who on the grave of a life gnaws his clenched fist, and then turns away the expressionless, nervously blinking head, because he, whose every fibre should now be speaking to us loudly, has nothing to say to the auditor. No *petit maître*, who yesterday sat next to us in the train, or will cross Auntie's path to-morrow. One of the race of Titans, who has condescended to reside here, and carries every garment, that of the Assyrian and of the Roman, of the mythical Scot and of the Magus, with easy grace. Who need not weave wordy fabrics (how often did he, distrustful of speech, wish himself back on pantomime's dumb stage) to deliver sorrow and joy from all restraint. To whom it was given by the gods to manifest his innermost emotions on the ever mobile surface of his countenance. A fellow of gigantic personality; yet natural for all his size. Whoever heard a lion at pairing time purr like a tom-cat? Do you expect it because he, too, belongs to the feline tribe? Not all fierceness, ye over-civilised, has yet been tamed in your cage.

But rejoice and stroke the pussies: theirs from now onward is the kingdom; the last lion is dead.

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